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The Medicine Master:

Yakushi Buddha Icons and Devotional Practices

in Heian Japan

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by

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To my parents, Noriyuki and Hisako Suzuki

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Medicine Master:
Yakushi Buddha Icons and Devotional Practices in Heian Japan

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In this dissertation I investigate the religious and cultural role of Buddhist images during the Heian period (794 –1184CE) in Japan. Buddhist images in the discipline of Japanese art history have typically been analyzed as aesthetic objects. Unfortunately, such a perspective fails to explain why the images were made, how they were venerated, and what functions they served in religious practice. Moreover, it reveals little about the people who worshipped them. In this study, I analyze Buddhist sculpture as *icons:* principal objects of worship that are enshrined and thus contextualized within ritual space. I utilize methodology outside of traditional art history, borrowing from anthropology, cultural history and religious studies, to contend that Buddhist icons are not merely *representations* of the sacred, but are regarded as the actual deities themselves; their powers heightened during ritual performances. Through contextual analysis I demonstrate that icons are the primary site of ongoing exchange between the human and the divine.

I reexamine Heian period wooden *Yakushi* 薬師 sculptures, also known in the West as Medicine Master Buddha, or the Healing Buddha (Skt. Bhaiṣajya-guru). The large number

of Heian period (794-1185)Yakushi statuary found all across Japan even today attests to the fact that worship of this deity was widely disseminated. My research attempts to understand why a significantly high number of *Yakushi* images were created during this period, a time of remarkable cultural, religious, artistic and political developments. By exploring these Medicine Buddhas in relation to how their iconographic forms were developed and promoted by certain religious and elite circles, and by studying their iconic functions in relation to their ritual programs, my thesis will render intelligible the complex phenomenon of image veneration: a central theme of Japanese religiosity. I also contend that the standing *Yakushi* icon type can be traced to the iconographical and ritual lineage of the *Tendai* sect, one of the most influential Buddhist institutions in premodern Japan.

INTRODUCTION

In this dissertation I examine Heian period images (794-1185) of the Buddhist deity of Medicine, *Yakushi* 薬師, and associated ritual practices within the context of icon worship. The role of iconic worship in East Asian Buddhist practice has traditionally been the focus of analysis by scholars in fields other than art history, primarily in Buddhist studies and religious history. Recently, however, scholars across disciplines have started collaborating to produce a more balanced and richer understanding of Buddhist image veneration.[1] Following such collaborative work, this dissertation fills a gap in scholarship by combining a rigorous art historical analysis of the icons as visual, material objects with a socio-historical analysis of their devotional matrix.

In regard to the actual study of Yakushi cultic worship, there are in fact only a few detailed studies to date (Akiyama, Gorai, Nishio).[2] One reason for this scarcity is that scholars have generally regarded Amida Buddha, rather than Yakushi, as the prevailing

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[1] Rober H. Sharf and Elizabeth Horton Sharf eds., *Living Images: Japanese Buddhist Icons in Context* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 3-5. A more recent study that problematizes the complex notion of images and icon worship is by Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara, *Images in Asian Religions: Texts and Contexts* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004). The book is mainly concerned with challenging the primacy afforded to images as being essentially anthropomorphic. It also examines how different groups of people responded in a wide variety of strategies to icons and the importance of recovering images through specific contextual analyses.

[2] Akiyama Dai 秋山大, *Genze shinkō no hyōgen to shite no Yakushi zōzō: Nihon bukkyō shinkō no gensho keitai ni kansuru shitekikenkyū* (Yokohama: Ōkurayama Seishin Bunka Kenkyūjo, 1940); Gorai Shigeru 五来重, *Yakushi shinkō,* Minshū shūkyōshi sōsho, no. 12 (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1986); Nishio Masahito 西尾正仁, *Yakushi shinkō: gokoku no hotoke kara onsen no hotoke e* (Tokyo: Iwata Shoin, 2000).

paradigm of late Heian Japanese devotional worship.[3] The cult of Amida Buddha 阿弥陀 (Skt. Amitābha) developed into different devotional sects (e.g. Jōdo 浄土宗 sect, Jōdo Shin 浄土真宗 sect, Ji 時宗 sect) during medieval times. Due to this development, modern scholars of Japanese religion have tended to follow this premodern sectarian classification in discussing medieval religious history. In contrast, Yakushi worship basically remained outside the scope of scholarly interest, chiefly because a sectarian worship of the Medicine Buddha never developed in Japan. Instead, it maintained a folk religious character by intermingling with local traditions.[4] Furthermore, there has been a tendency in the past for scholars to follow the "two-tier model" in separating "true" Buddhism (i.e. doctrinal, theological, philosophical, and monastic) from "lesser" Buddhism (such as the indigenous beliefs of commoners) that has also discouraged serious study of Yakushi.[5]

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[3] The predominance of Amida worship is generally explained as a reaction to growing concerns and fears of *mappō* 末法, a Buddhist apocalyptic age (calculated to begin in 1052). It was believed that during this time, the Buddhist Law would become degenerate and would no longer be able to save even the most devout believers. In Japan, worship of Amida became widespread from the mid eleventh century because it was believed that only the pure faith placed in this deity promised salvation (in the form of rebirth in Amida's Pure Land paradise). See for example Joseph Kitagawa, "Kami, Amida and Jizō: Religious Development during the Heian Period" in *Religion in Japanese History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), 46-85.

[4] Murayama Shūichi 村山修一, "Nihon no Yakushi shinkō," in *Shūgō shisōshi ronkō* (Tokyo: Hanawa Shobō, 1987).

[5] Richard S. Cohen, "Nāgā, Yakṣiṇī, Buddha: Local Deities and Local Buddhism at Ajanta," *History of Religions* 37, no. 4 (1998): 361. In his study of the fifth century Buddhist cave-temples of Ajanta, India, Cohen explains that the criteria for defining "normative" Buddhism has typically been explained in the "two-tiered" model, with 'True Buddhism" being the Buddhism founded on true philosophy while "lesser Buddhism" has been defined as the superstitious, folk and indigenous beliefs and practices.

Mahayana Buddhism was introduced to Japan in the mid sixth century, and by the second half of the seventh century, many Buddhas and Bodhisattvas that were expounded in the sacred scriptures rose to special prominence as efficacious gods promising not only spiritual benefits but also this-worldly gains (such as curing diseases, preventing inauspicious events, dispelling evil spirits, ensuring safe childbirth, ensuring abundant crops, and so forth). The Medicine Buddha Sutra explains Yakushi's indomitable abilities, presenting him as both a soteriological and apotropaic deity who promises to eliminate every possible sort of physical and mental affliction for the faithful devotees who venerate his image, respectfully chant his name, and make offerings to his image.

The pioneer work on the devotional cult of Yakushi is Akiyama Dai's *Genze shinkō no hyōgen to shite no Yakushi zōzō – Nihon bukkyō shinkō no gensho keitai ni kansuru shiteki kenkyū* ("Yakushi images as an expression of this-worldly beliefs: studies on the early forms of Japanese Buddhist practices").[6] Another is Gorai Shigeru's edited volume, *Yakushi shinkō* (Yakushi worship): a compilation of various studies on Yakushi worship from the perspective of folk/popular religion.[7] Gorai argues that to truly understand how this deity was venerated, one must examine ethnographic studies of localized practices of Yakushi worship that existed outside doctrinal parameters. He therefore claims that his book is focused not just on "famous" or "prestigious" temples but also on local Yakushi temples and Yakushi halls.

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[6] Akiyama Dai, *Yakushi zōzō.*

[7] Gorai Shigeru, *Yakushi shinkō.*

Nishio Masahito's book *Yakushi shinkō: gokoku no hotoke kara onsen no hotoke e*, built upon Gorai's work, is a more recent study on this subject.[8] While Gorai's edited volume attempts to examine Yakushi worship in its historical and regional contexts and the commonalities among them, Nishio tries to find distinctive characteristics of Yakushi worship from the past to the present, focusing on certain individuals and religious groups crucial in disseminating the devotional cult across the country. Nishio also examines folk legends (*minkan setsuwa* 民間説話) which reinforced belief in Yakushi's miraculous powers.

Though icons are almost always the center of devotional focus in these ethnographic studies, they are often only implied, and never examined from the perspective that they are the primary mode of ritual and devotional practices in Japan. By exploring the Heian images of Yakushi in relation to their ritual programs and by emphasizing their role as sites where the sacred is made manifest, this study will demonstrate that icon veneration was a central theme of Japanese religiosity.[9]

It should also be mentioned here that I rely significantly in this study on textual sources from later periods (particularly in chapters two and five) for the reconstruction of non-extant Yakushi images and rituals. Research on the Heian period is often fraught with a lack of primary sources; there is some archaeological data, but compared to later periods with a relatively rich body of written materials, the written data are scarce for the period in question, most often lost to fires. Although this dissertation often utilizes texts from much later periods, such as *Asabashō* 阿娑縛抄 from the thirteenth and *Sanmon dōshaki* 山門堂舎記

[8] Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō.*

[9] Sharf and Sharf eds. *Living Images,* p. 189.

and *Monyōki* 門葉記 from the fourteenth centuries, I have taken methodological precautions regarding my use of such texts. Here, I follow Donald McCallum's methodology in textual analysis where he states that we must exercise great caution in determining the author's motivations:

> If a specific account seems to have been written primarily to enhance the reputation of a certain individual or group, one must be exceedingly cautious in accepting its veracity. On the other hand, if what is said seems not to be basically self-serving, we are perhaps justified in at least tentatively adopting its data for our own purposes.[10]

Chapter One, "Yakushi: Icon, Ritual and Iconography" provides a comprehensive overview of the role of Yakushi as religious icons and an iconographical description of this deity. My position concerning icons is that they are not just representations of the deity, but in certain moments such as during ritual performances, they are animated and become the deity. I also explain that icons are multivalent entities, whose meanings shift and are constantly being redefined and reframed by the worshippers. I also examine the relationship between icons and rituals and offer my understanding of ritual, a concept that has tended to be overused and therefore misunderstood. The second half of this chapter is devoted to explaining the historical development of Yakushi worship in Japan leading up to the Heian period. The two most widely circulated sutras on the Medicine Buddha are discussed and the main features of the canons that helped shape the various devotional practices centered on Yakushi are outlined. I also examine the various iconographic types of Yakushi and his

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[10] McCallum, "Earliest Buddhist Statues,"p. 156.

attendants, as they were represented in Japan, with reference to two medieval ritual and iconography compendia, the *Asabashō* and *Kakuzenshō.*

In Chapter Two, I describe the ten standing Yakushi images that were once enshrined in the Central Hall (Konpon chūdō 根本中堂) of the temple Enryakuji, headquarters of the Buddhist Tendai sect, founded by Saichō (766-822). Even though Enryakuji was one of the most powerful and influential religious institutions in Japanese history, not much is known or has been written about Tendai Buddhist statuary, especially as compared to the statuary of the Shingon sect due to the fact that the temple complex experienced a series of fires that destroyed many of the buildings, their written records, as well as most of the original statuary at Enryakuji including the ten Yakushi images.

Chapter Two is an attempt to reconstruct some of these images, which I call the Enryakuji *Konpon chūdō* icon type, by a detailed examination of various textual sources that describe these icons. In doing so I define a generalized picture of what these images were like and explore how the iconographical and ritual lineage of the standing Yakushi icon type can be traced to Saichō, who had a special relationship with this deity. Central to this chapter is the issue of "icon replication," where the efficacy of the Buddhist icon is transmitted by imitating an established powerful icon. However as the chapter will reveal, replication in the Heian period did not necessarily mean the creation of "exact copies." To exemplify this, several extant Heian period Yakushi images which closely match the descriptions of the Enryakuji Central Hall Yakushi are analyzed. I argue that certain characteristics of the Enryakuji Yakushi were copied in temples all over Japan, and demonstrate that they were of the same iconographical lineage. This auspicious standing Yakushi was thereby developed

during the Heian period by Tendai advocates and shows their far-reaching influence in disseminating worship of Yakushi.

Chapter Three is a case study of a single standing Yakushi statue from Jingoji temple in Kyoto, Japan, considered to be one of the best preserved examples of unpainted wood statues from the ninth century, appearing in every standard textbook of Japanese art. An overview of the Jingoji Yakushi's historiography concerning the provenance of this image is first provided, as it is relevant to the subsequent discussion in the second half of Chapter Three. Then I contend that the image is closely associated to Saichō and the now lost Enryakuji Central Hall Yakushi images (there were a total of ten Yakushi images enshrined, all made in the ninth century). The general theory concerning the Yakushi's provenance is that the image was made for a temple called Jinganji 神願寺 by an important court official, Wake no Kiyomaro 和気清麻呂 (733-799), at the end of the eighth century. More recently, two scholars have proposed a new hypothesis: that the Yakushi icon was made in the early ninth century for a temple called Takaosanji 高雄山寺, established by the sons of Wake no Kiyomaro. I support the latter theory that the Jingoji Yakushi was made as a principal icon for Takaosanji, by providing a formalistic analysis of the image. To further strengthen this position, a detailed political and religious background for the first half of the ninth century is provided as well as an outline of the special relationship the patrons of Takaosanji had with Saichō.

This leads to the second half of Chapter Three, which investigates the religious significance of the image, mainly its apotropaic powers and the rituals performed to activate these powers. The Yakushi's stern countenance and striking form is the ultimate expression

of the angry and threatening aspect of the Medicine Buddha, designed to pacify vengeful spirits (*onyrō* 怨霊). In association with this belief, Buddhist repentance rituals known as Yakushi *keka* 悔過 were frequently performed in the first half of the Heian period for the purposes of quelling calamitous events (droughts, famines, diseases); often, angry spirits of court officials and priests defeated in political intrigues were thought to be the cause of these inauspicious occurrences and at other times, they were thought to be caused by angered localized gods (*kami* 神).

Buddhist repentance rituals using Yakushi images were performed frequently between the years 830-850 at prominent state-sponsored temples that enshrined this deity, including Enryakuji and Jingoji. I describe the historical development of these repentance rituals from the eighth to the ninth century, and show how they evolved to embody the idea of protection and prosperity of the country (*chingo kokka* 鎮護国家) that included praying for the ripening and abundance of crops.

Chapter Four concentrates on the iconographical origins of the seated sculptural images of Yakushi that bear seven smaller Medicine Buddha images on the mandorla (the frame placed behind the Buddha image to represent the aura of light emitted from his body), known as The Seven Medicine Buddhas (*Shichibutsu Yakushi* 七仏薬師). The Buddhist notion of the "Seven Medicine Buddhas" became well-known in Japan through an eighth century Chinese translation of the sutra titled *Sutra on the Merits of the Original Vows of the Seven Buddhas of Lapis Lazuli Radiance, the Masters of Medicine* that was brought over from Tang China sometime in the eighth century. Historical records indicate that the worship of the Seven Medicine Buddhas flourished in the mid eighth period but its iconography is rather

ambiguous.[11] To clarify these iconographical issues, I first outline the major art historical discussions on the worship of Seven Medicine Buddhas and Heian period Yakushi images associated with this seated iconic type. Particularly, specific stylistic and iconographical features of Yakushi images from the temples Shinyakushiji (Nara), Shōjiji (Kyoto), and Kuroishidera (Iwate) will be examined. Based on this analysis of historical documents and several examples of extant seated Yakushi from the Heian period, I argue that this was one of the first significant iconic forms of Yakushi to become popular in Japan, and explore the devotional cult and ritual associated with these images.

Finally in Chapter Five, two sets of seven Medicine Buddhas from a temple called Matsumushidera (Chiba prefecture) and Kokōkaku (Shiga prefecture) dated to the twelfth and early thirteenth century respectively is discussed. These are the only two extant examples where the Medicine Buddha is represented as seven individual and separate entities, rather than on the mandorla of the main icon, as described in Chapter Four. I contend that such "sets" representing seven individual Medicine Buddhas were quite frequently made in the second half of the Heian period and used in a Tendai esoteric ritual known as the Ritual of the Seven Medicine Buddhas (*Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* 薬師法), developed by powerful Tendai ecclesiastics at Enryakuji. I also demonstrate that the Matsumushidera and Kokōkaku sets traced their iconographical lineage to a set of seven Yakushi images enshrined in the Central

11 For example, the *Tōdaiji yōroku* (compiled in the early twelfth century) notes: "In the third month of Tenpyō 19 (747), the Empress Ninshō (Kōken) established the temple Shin Yakushiji, and had images of the Seven Yakushi made (to pray) for Emperor Shōmu's illness." Since these images are no longer extant, it is not certain how they were depicted. Tsutsui Eishun ed. *Tōdaiji yōroku* (Osaka: Zenkoku Shobō, 1944).

Hall of Enryakuji by reconstructing a generalized description of this set and associated ritual practices.

In the next section, the connection between esoteric Tendai praxis at Enryakuji and Shichibutsu Yakushi Buddha images is discussed. In the second half of the Heian period, Tendai monks effectively monopolized Yakushi as an efficacious deity for its healing powers as well as for its abilities to provide relief from calamities and to bestow good fortune. This culminated in the patronage of majestic Shichibutsu Yakushi halls and images by members of the royal family and the nobility, particularly the powerful Fujiwara clan that dominated court politics from the tenth century until the end of the Heian period. In the final section of Chapter Five, I recreate the Shichibutsu Yakushi ritual space, as recorded in the *Asabashō* and *Monyōki* texts which describe it in some detail, as well as the sequence of ritual actions that took place, which included a section that was specifically aimed to empower the "body of the tennō."[12] This ritual involved the sovereign offering his royal robes to the Medicine Buddhas.

This research offers a comprehensive study of Heian Yakushi images and examines some of the most significant sculptures in Japanese art and history. By reconstructing the now-lost images of Yakushi in the main sanctuary of Enryakuji, I demonstrate the Tendai sect's influential role in promoting the iconography of the standing Yakushi. Furthermore, by situating Yakushi in the social, political and ritual context of Heian Japan, the study validates icons as living entities whose meanings are multifarious and perpetually shifting.

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[12] The translation "emperor" has traditionally been used to denote the royal sovereign of Japan. For consistency, I use "tennō" throughout my dissertation. For a discussion on the problematic usage of "emperor" see Joan R. Piggott, *The Emergence of Japanese Kingship* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1997), 8-9.

CHAPTER ONE

Yakushi: Icon, Ritual and Iconography

1. Introduction

Yakushi worship in Japan clearly demonstrates *genze riyaku* 現世利益 ("this-worldly benefits" or "practical benefits") and is a central, underlying characteristic of Japanese religion.[1] Yakushi images, colloquially known as "Oyakushi san"お薬師さん are familiar faces even in contemporary Japan. The Jōruriji 浄瑠璃寺 Yakushi in Ehime prefecture, "Himizu no Yakushi"日見ずの薬師, is known for its rain-bestowing powers, while the Yusanji 油山寺 Yakushi from Shizuoka is famous for healing bad eyesight. The Kyoto Hōkaiji 法界寺 Yakushi is popular among mothers for his beneficial ability to bestow easy childbirth and ample milk for breastfeeding. The Gannōji 願王寺 Hechima Yakushi from Nagaoya has a reputation for curing asthma. In the form of localized practices, the devotional worship of this Buddha is very much alive today. The secret to Yakushi's success lies in the deity's fundamental character as a remedial deity of *genze riyaku*, which is a "powerful and well-entrenched value system that may seem invisible because it is not organized into a formal structure, and moreover, is both pervasive and nonspecific."[2] As I stated in the abstract, this dissertation examines Heian period (794-1185) wooden *Yakushi* 薬

[1] See Ian Reader and George J. Tanabe Jr., *Practically Religious: Worldly Benefits and the Common Religion of Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998).

[2] Ibid., p. 261.

師 sculptures (Skt. Bhaiṣajya-guru) and their devotional cultic practices.[3] My research attempts to uncover the reasons behind Yakushi's immense popularity in relation to its images, the ways in which its devotional cult and iconography was formulated and promoted by monastic authorities, and to locate their iconic functions within specific ritual practices.

In this dissertation I employ new methodological tools that articulate the variety of ways in which the Medicine Buddha was worshipped in Heian period ceremonial programs. Tackling the topic from an interdisciplinary approach is most viable because while Japanese scholarship on Japanese Buddhist sculptural art is quite rich, Western scholarship still continues to be somewhat limited. Moreover, though Japanese scholarship has made important contributions to our understanding of Heian Buddhist art, in the past it has tended to fixate on the formalistic, technical and/or iconographical analysis of the sculptures rather than how they may have functioned in their ritual contexts.[4] Since this research examines Yakushi Buddhas not just as sculptural objects but icons that interact with their rituals and sacred space, it attempts to go beyond the confines of such conventional art historical evolutionary schemes by recovering the meanings and functions of these images in their specific cultural and religious milieu.

This is not in any way meant to deny or belittle the important contribution formalistic analysis have made to Japanese Buddhist art. It is because this area has been so

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[3] By "devotional cult" I do not imply a pejorative meaning as it is often used today but define it as a system or community of ritual and religious worship.

[4] By " formalistic," I mean the analysis of the work of art in terms of color, texture, mass, composition, shape, line and other distinguishing characteristics that mark the Heian period Buddhist images) and by "iconographical," the specific symbolic content or meaning of the images.

extensively studied that one is able to explore the topic through the application of new interpretive strategies. I should also point out that study of Heian period Yakushi images is particularly meaningful because it coincides with the period when wood becomes the preferred medium for Buddhist sculpture, remaining that way for the rest of Japanese history, in contrast to China and Korea where artists continued to make sculpture in a variety of mediums, such as clay, stone and bronze.

The research focuses on the Heian period, a time remarkable for cultural, religious, artistic and political developments. The first two centuries of this era have been characterized as being both a continuation of the previous Nara period tradition (710-794) and an innovative era of sculptural styles and techniques. During the Nara period, Buddhist sculptures were executed mainly in brightly painted or polychromed clay, dry lacquer, and gilt bronze. Though there is a continuation of this Nara sculptural tradition, the late eighth and ninth periods witnesses a burgeoning of wooden sculpture known to art historians as "pure wood" images.

Traditional Japanese art history has divided the Heian period into two distinctive phases. The first is known as Early Heian or as *Jōgan* (794-894). The second is the Late Heian or Fujiwara (894-1185) period, with the latter period usually characterized by developments that took place mainly in the eleventh century.[5]

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[5] See Kurata Bunsaku, *Jōgan chōkoku*, *NB* 44 (1970) for discussions on early Heian sculpture; Nakano Genzō 中野玄三, *Fujiwara chōkoku*, *NB* 50 (1970), for a good summary in English, see Donald F. McCallum "Heian Sculpture at the Tokyo National Museum, Part I,"*AA* 35, nos. 2/3 (1973): 278-292 and "Heian Sculpture at the Tokyo National Museum, Part II" *AA* 36, nos. 1/2 (1974): 219-241. The terms "Jōgan" and "Fujiwara" are not really employed any more and scholars prefer to employ the terms "Heian zenki 平安前期 (early Heian)" and "Heian kōki 平安後期 (late Heian)." Recently, the *Nihon no bijutsu* series published two

Pure wood images of the early Heian emphasized the natural grain of the wood and were normally unpainted except for a few polychrome highlights to the face. The surface of the wood was often strongly articulated with deep, vigorous carving and applications of sharp contours to the drapery fold. Many of the images are characterized by solemn, severe facial expressions, even 'awe-inspiring" and "monumental."[6] Representative examples of early Heian sculpture are the Jingoji 神護寺 Yakushi, Shin Yakushiji 新薬師持 Yakushi and the Hokkeji 法華寺 Eleven-headed Kannon bodhisattva (*Juichimen kannon bosatsu* 十一面観音菩薩).[7] Moreover, these works were executed from single blocks of wood, known as the *ichiboku zukuri* 一木造り carving technique. Bronze, clay, and dry lacquer images were very costly and as the worship of specific, individual deities became more widespread among a larger populace, pure-wood images became the dominant sculptural form from the ninth and tenth centuries.

In the late tenth and eleventh centuries, a new technique called *yosegi zukuri* 寄木造 became popular, where statues were made out of a number of joined-wood blocks. These joined-wood block images were usually coated with lacquer and gilt. This innovation allowed

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volumes on Heian sculpture, which includes current scholarly research on Buddhist sculpture, such as that of Nagaoka Ryūsaku 長岡隆作. See Iwasa Mitsuharu, *Heian jidai zenki no chōkoku: ichibokuchō no tenkai, NB* 457 (2004); Itō Shirō 伊藤史朗, *Heian jidai kōki no chōkoku: shinkō to bi no chōwa, NB* 458 (2004).

[6] Hasumi Shigeyasu 蓮実重康, "Heian shoki chōkoku no tenkai," *Kokka* 800 (1958); Kuno Takeshi 久野健, *Heian shoki chōkokushi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1974); Shimizu Zenzō 清水善三, *Heian chōkokushi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1996).

[7] See Itō Shirō 伊藤史朗, *Yakushi nyoraizō, NB* 242 (1986), pl. 7 and pl. 37 (Shin Yakushiji image) and pl. 58 (Jingoji image). See Iwasa, *Ichibokuchō no tenkai*, pl. 53 for the Hokkeji image.

for very large images to be made in a relatively short amount of time. The Byōdōin Amida 平等院阿弥陀, made by the sculptor Jōchō 定朝 is a type case for the fully developed *yosegi* method. It is very different from the spontaneity and immediacy of *ichiboku*. *Yosegi* was based on a blueprint that the master carver (Jōchō) had created and the craftsmen had no alternative but to follow the detailed blueprint that dictated the form. This system of working on sections of the wood and assembling them together at the end produced more symmetrical, well-balanced images. Moreover, since the joint-block technique did not allow for deep incisions, the shallow carving created elegant, graceful images, usually with flowing drapery resembling wavelets.

2. The Icon

Since this research examines the role of Yakushi statues as sacred icons in the Heian period, in this section I would like to clarify what I mean by this rather overused term and present an overview of how other scholars of various disciplines have discussed Japanese Buddhist icons.

The term icon is complex, especially since it can mean a number of things. It originates from the Greek word *eikōn* meaning "an image, figure or likeness" In art history, it is often used to denote a representation or picture of a sacred or sanctified Christian personage, particularly in Eastern Christianity. But the word can also refer to "an important, enduring symbol" (e.g. the American flag), or even a person, "one who is the object of great attention and devotion; an idol (e.g. Marilyn Monroe). It is primarily the first definition that I employ.

Despite complaints made by scholars concerning "traditional" and "aesthetic" methods employed by art historians regarding this topic, Donald F. McCallum's *Zenkōji and its Icon*, is a seminal work in the discipline of art history dealing with Japanese Buddhist icons as religious images that are both representations and the embodiments of the divine.[8] McCallum offers three conceptions of the meaning of icon as follows:

1. The icon as representation or likeness of the deity.
2. The icon as symbol of the deity.
3. The icon as the deity.[9]

While Buddhist statues may function in all three arenas, it is the last definition that is the most intriguing and difficult to understand and elucidate. To further elaborate on its

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[8] See Bernard Faure, "The Buddist Icon and the Modern Gaze," *Critical Inquiry* 24, no. 3 (1998): 768-813. Faure's article is mainly concerned with the inadequacies of the way in which Buddhist icons have been treated, particularly by art historians as aesthetic objects, and through Chinese, Japanese and Western examples sets out to rethink Buddhist icons from the perspective of their history, affect and function, as well as to reflect upon how we, in the modern world might respond to the idea of icons. He writes, "This means attempting to free ourselves from the obsession with meaning (symbolism, iconology in the Panofskian sense) and form (style) in order to retrieve the affect, effectivity, and function of the icon." (p.787). In Donald F. McCallum's work, *Zenkōji and its Icon: A Study of Medieval Japanese Religious Art* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1994) which Faure does not cite, McCallum states, "The great importance of sculptural icons for Buddhist practice in Japan can hardly be overestimated. From the earliest stages of Japanese Buddhism, during the six and seventh centuries, such icons played a crucial role in the propagation and growth of the new religion, and they continued to occupy a central position in the subsequent centuries....I am stressing here the function of the sculptural icon as the focus for religious devotion, in order to direct attention away from conventional viewpoints that conceptualize these icons as works of art."(p.4) "In fact, I intend this study to challenge some of the basic premises of orthodox "history of sculpture," in that the focus will be shifted from works of art thought of in aesthetic terms to icons conceptualized in terms of religious function; what David Freedberg refers to as "the power of images."(p.5). For sacred icons in general, see David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

[9] McCallum, *Zenkōji*, p. 182.

meaning, according to Robert Sharf, the divine nature of an icon denotes the ability to partake or share in the very nature of the divine. They are "animated" through ritual, liturgy as well as narrative and myth.[10]

In another study, Sharf offers a semiotic explanation on how an icon can be empowered with the essence of the deity. He argues that Buddhists have attempted to eliminate the inherent and problematic gap created by the subject/object dichotomy through the use of a variety of rituals, one being the eye-opening ceremony that transforms the Buddhist image into an animated, sacred presence through an elaborate series of offerings.[11]

Another fundamental characteristic of the icon is that its essential being is defined by its rather complex relationship it has with the viewers (i.e. worshippers). An icon is constantly being relocated, reframed and reinterpreted by the people it comes in contact with.[12] Moreover, in this intimate relationship, the icon is almost always something "miraculous" and is associated with a sacred narrative that tells of these images doing a variety of unusual things such as crying, emitting light, talking, sweating and bleeding.[13] In

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[10] Robert H. Sharf and Elizabeth Horton Sharf eds., *Living Images: Japanese Buddhist Icons in Context,* (Stanford University Press, 2001), 15.

[11] Robert H. Sharf, "On the Allure of Buddhist Relics," *Representations* 66 (1999): 81.

[12] This is an important point made by Richard H. Davis, in *Lives of Indian Images* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), 260.

[13] For a discussion on images and miracles, see Richard H. Davis ed., *Images, Miracles, and Authority in Asian Religious Traditions*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998).

Asian traditions, religious icons are known to do such things, and such stories constituted claims to religious authority.[14]

Nihon ryōiki, an early Heian period collection of Buddhist legends compiled by the monk Kyōkai 景戒 is full of delightful tales of wooden images doing wondrous, miraculous acts.[15] The two stories I am about to present from this collection clearly demonstrate the centrality of image veneration for the Japanese in ancient times and how religious narratives were able to animate Buddhist icons just as effectively as ritual and liturgy.[16] In the story, "On the Wooden Image of Yakushi Buddha Which Showed an Extraordinary Sign, Washed away in the Water and Buried in the Sand"[17] a monk who was traveling through Tōtōmi province heard a persistent voice calling " Let me out, let me out!" from the sand on the beach of Uda. When he dug the sand from where the voice came, he found a wooden image of Yakushi Buddha with both ears missing. Horrified, the monk invited a sculptor to fix the ears of the Buddha and with the help of local devotees, built a hall in the village of Uda where he enshrined and venerated the image. The story continued, "Clergy and laymen all revered this Buddha, for it gave out light, revealing a miraculous sign, and generously granted their

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[14] Ibid., p. 6.

[15] In *Nihon ryōiki* vol. 2, tale 39, and vol. 3, tale 11. Keikai, *Nihon ryōiki*, trans. Koizumi Osamu 小泉道 (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1984). *Nihon ryōiki* is a collection of over one hundred Buddhist legendary tales (*setsuwa* 説話) compiled by the Yakushiji priest Keikai in the first half of the ninth century. Most of the tales are set in the Nara period during Shōmu's reign, but some go as far back as the later fifth century.

[16] Sharf and Sharf, *Living Images*, p. 15.

[17] This story appears in Book 2, chapter 39. Kyoko Motomochi Nakamura trans., *Miraculous Stories from the Japanese Buddhist Tradition* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 211-212; Koizumi, pp. 195-196.

wishes." The story ends by stating, "It was similar to the sandalwood statue made by Uten which stood up to pay homage to the Buddha, or the wooden image of Tinglan's mother which moved as if alive as tradition says."[18]

In another story "On a Blind Woman Whose Sight Was Restored Owing to Her Devotion to the Wooden Image of Yakushi Buddha," a blind but pious woman prayed earnestly to an image of Yakushi Buddha, asking him to restore her eyesight, worried that in her blindness, she would not be able to properly take care of her young daughter. She paid homage to the image and recited his name. Two days later, the image oozed something pink and sticky from its breast. The daughter told her mother about it and the woman asked her daughter to take some of it and put it in the woman's mouth. After the mother ate it, her eyes were opened. The story ends with the moral, "Indeed we learn that any vow will be fulfilled if made with utmost devotion. This is an extraordinary event."

These stories clearly demonstrate that Buddhist practitioners, whether clerical or lay, regarded certain sacred icons as divine beings. Robert Sharf remarks, "Rather than viewing Buddhist image veneration as bespeaking the inability to distinguish the animate from the inanimate, or the signified from the signifier, we might do better to regard such religious acts as socially sanctioned and ritually structured meditations on the puzzle of embodiment and the seemingly intractable mystery of sentience itself."[19]

The devotees' undifferentiated attitude concerning a Buddhist image and the deity can also be explained by what Richard Davis calls the "devotional eye" that is adopted on

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[18] This story appears in Book 3, chapter 11. Nakamura, n. 8, p. 212; Koizumi, pp. 234-235.

[19] Sharf and Sharf, *Living Images*, p. 16 and Sharf, "Allure of Sacred Images," pp. 75-99.

part of the believer.[20] It is not the case that people in ancient Japan could not distinguish between a wooden object (i.e. the wooden statue) and a Buddha; rather, in adopting a particularly devotional frame of values within a community that shared such values, the object was viewed as an animate, living entity. This is why in the *Nihon ryōiki* stories, it is a monk and a pious lay woman who were rewarded for their reverence to the Yakushi statues. Their devotion to Yakushi was not based on complicated doctrines expounded by the sutras, but on the simple notion that faith in him promoted good health, recovery from sickness, prevention of illness and longevity, as noted by Sharf:

> Japanese Buddhist images were frequently treated, by elite monastics and unschooled laypersons alike, as more than mere didactic symbols, representations, or commemorations of divine figures or saints. Japanese Buddhist icons were regarded, more often than not, as living presences with considerable apotropaic and salvific power. This conclusion is simply inescapable: it is reiterated in historical documents, in liturgical and ritual materials, in biographies, hagiographies, and mythology, and is fully countenanced by scripture and commentary.[21]

3. Rituals

The reader will find that in conjunction to the term *icon*, *ritual* also makes a frequent appearance in this dissertation. Ritual studies is a theoretical discourse that has a long history going back to the turn of the century and it is not my intention here to present an overview of all the existing theories. When I first began thinking about the relationship between icons

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[20] Davis, *Images, Miracles and Authority*, p. 11.

[21] Sharf and Sharf, *Living Images*, p. 8.

and ritual, new scholarship on ritual studies were just starting to appear.[22] From the late nineties and even currently, "ritual" has become a rather fashionable topic; the downside is that now scholars utilize the word with the gross presumption that they are all talking about the same thing, when in fact they are not. Thus it is essential that I clarify my own usage of this perplexing term.

Prior to Catherine Bell's scholarship on ritual, the observations by social and cultural anthropologists, such as Victor Turner, Mary Douglas and Clifford Geertz were significant.[23] They viewed ritual as a system of symbols that contained important cultural or social meanings and values. More recent studies on ritual, such as the research by Humphrey and Laidlaw, proposed alternative ways for approaching ritual studies because they felt that rituals did not always fit neatly into this model of a symbolic system that communicated important cultural values, meanings and aesthetics.

One of the most helpful ways in which we can attempt to think about ritual, and the ways in which other scholars utilize this vague term, is to have a heightened awareness that scholars have generally tackled the topic from two interpretive modes – the universalistic approach and the particularistic. Universalists have attempted to see ritual as something

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[22] See for example, Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) and *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Caroline Humphrey and James Laidlaw, *The Archetypal Actions of Ritual: A Theory of Ritual Illustrated by the Jain Rite of Worship* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

[23] Victor W. Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co. 1969); Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (Harmondworth: Penguin, 1970); Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

essential, a universal category of human experience and action.[24] Those who support the particularistic approach on the other hand, see ritual as socially and culturally specific. In my research, I underscore the idea that the ritual functions of Yakushi icons were affected not only by time, but also by changes in political, social and cultural circumstances. Thus the rituals discussed here should be seen as situational or relational categories, rather than substantive ones. This implies that the boundaries are mobile and the rituals shifted according to the map being employed.[25] This is also in accordance to my understanding of icons, as "social beings whose identities are not fixed once and for all at the moment of fabrication, but are repeatedly made and remade through interactions with humans."[26]

Here, I present a few important definitions on ritual that are useful for this research. Catherine Bell views ritual as a form of practice which is highly strategic, that reproduces, maintains the existing culture and social structure, and is heavily shaped by power relations.[27] This concept is helpful in considering the Shichibutsu Yakushi ritual and the aristocratic patrons who sponsored these rituals in the late Heian period, a topic that will be explored in detail in Chapter Five. Bell emphasizes the idea that rituals are culturally specific, stating that in every culture, there are some activities that are perceived and defined by its members as being "ritual" practices and are automatically assumed to be different from other forms of

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[24] Bell, *Ritual Theory*, p. 69.

[25] Jonathan Z. Smith, *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 55.

[26] Davis, *Indian Images*, pp. 7-8.

[27] Bell, *Ritual Theory*, p. 220.

activities. When social agents are involved in these ritualized activities, they become engaged in a strategy for the constitution of power relations; one that is not coerced, but is a "socially instinctive response to how things are."[28]

Another useful interpretation of ritual is Jonathan Z. Smith's definition, "Ritual is a means of performing the way things ought to be in conscious tension to the way things are in such a way that this ritualized perfection is recollected in the ordinary, uncontrolled, course of things."[29] This is particularly useful for my discussion of why during the late eighth and early ninth centuries, the government ordered major temples to perform Yakushi *keka* rituals, to prevent calamities from occurring (epidemics, crop failure, etc) and to deal with disasters that have already happened.[30]

It also sheds light on why Fujiwara aristocrats were so avid in sponsoring esoteric Yakushi rituals (Shichibutsu Yakushi hō 七仏薬師法) and constructing elaborate Yakushi halls within their temple precincts (discussed in Chapter Five). The royal and aristocratic patrons' building of temples and their enthusiastic support of rituals do not necessarily indicate that these people blindly bought into the idea that praying to Yakushi Buddha and reciting the sutras ensured positive results, or that it would improve social conditions. In fact, it is the incongruity between ones' expectations and actuality that lie at the heart of ritual,

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[28] Bell, *Ritual Theory,* p. 206.

[29] Smith, *Imagining Religion*, p. 63.

[30] See for example, William Wayne Farris, *Population, Disease, and Land in Early Japan, 645-900*, (Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1985), appendix, Table B, "Epidemics in Japan, 698-898" This table shows that sutra-reading and ritual cleansing, replacement of Buddhist statues were all measures taken by the government (along with the dispatch of doctors, tax and grain relief and medicine) to deal with the spread of epidemics.

and serves as a vehicle of religious experience.[31] Building temples and sponsoring rituals was not only a central act of devotion, but an efficacious ritual action, as well as a highly visible political act.[32]

4. The Devotional Cult

The Medicine Master Buddha is known everywhere in East Asia: Yaoshi Fo in China, Yaksa yŏrae in Korea, Sangs-rygyas or Sman-blah in Tibet, Otochi in Mongolia, and Yakushi in Japan. Since Yakushi images have not been discovered in India, it has been suggested that the cult developed in Central Asia from where it was brought into China by pilgrim travelers.[33] In China, the cult flourished during the seventh and eighth centuries and eventually spread to other parts of East Asia such as Korea and Japan. Furthermore, the scriptures pertaining to this deity were developed later than the Lotus, Wisdom, and Pure Land (*Muryōju*) sutras.[34]

Yakushi's powers were particularly known to be efficacious for prolonging life, especially those at the brink of death. He was also renowned for preventing and curing disease and suffering, countering poisons, and dispelling evil spirits and nightmares. Extant

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[31] Jonathan Z. Smith, *Map in Not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 301.

[32] Richard H. Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe: Worshipping Siva in Medieval India* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991), 9.

[33] Raoul Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha* (Boston: Shambhala, 1979), 52-60.

[34] Nagai Shinichi 永井信一, "Chūgoku no Yakushizō," *BG* 159 (1985): 50. See also Ono Genmyō 小野玄妙, *Bukkyō no bijutsu to rekishi* (Tokyo: Kanao Bun'endō, 1937), 53; Sakaino Kōyō 境野黄洋, *Shina bukkyo seishi* (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1935), 127.

small bronze images of Yakushi from both the Sui and Tang periods confirm this Buddha's popularity in China. Evidence of the cult can also be found in the Longmen Cave Temples (Longmen cave no.11 and Guyang cave, no. 525) and at Dunhuang.[35] Nagai Shin'ichi's study of Yakushi paintings at Dunhuang demonstrates that the Medicine Buddha had a faithful following during the Sui and Tang periods.[36] Worship of the Medicine Buddha flourished in Korea as well, since there are quite a number of extant granite and gilt bronze and iron statues of the Medicine Buddha from the Unified Silla era, and a few from the Three Kingdoms period.[37]

One of the earliest pieces of evidence for the worship of Yakushi in Japan can be traced back to the 680s with the establishment of the royal temple Yakushiji 薬師寺 (Temple of the Medicine Buddha) in the Fujiwara capital during the reign of Tenmu and Jitō.[38] Yakushiji was one of the "Four Great Temples" in the Asuka region. McCallum has noted that of these four large-scale temples, this was the first royal temple that was given a proper Buddhist name in Japan; normally, earlier temples were designated names with geographical associations.[39] The fact the temple was named after a deity certainly shows the significance of Yakushi Buddha at this time, at least among the aristocracy. Unfortunately, only

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35 Itō, *Yakushi nyoraizō*, p. 24.

36 Nagai, "Chūgoku no Yakushi," pp. 54-55.

37 See for example plate 23 for a Three Kingdoms Period example, in Hwang Su-yŏng 黃壽永, *Pulsang*, in *Han'guk misul chŏnjip* 5 (Seoul: Tonghwa Ch'ulp'ansa, 1973).

38 The seventh century political center, prior to Heijōkyō (Nara). See Donald McCallum, *The Four Great Temples of Seventh Century Japan*, forthcoming.

39 Ibid.

documentary records have survived concerning the temple's main icon, but there is little doubt that it was a Yakushi image, and given the scale of the temple's Golden Hall, it was most likely a triad (i.e., with flanking bodhisattva attendants) of monumental size (*jōroku* 丈六).[40]

Another early example is the Kōfukuji Buddha Head 興福寺仏頭, all that remains of the Yakushi triad that was originally housed in the Lecture Hall of Yamadadera 山田寺, a temple constructed by the Soga family in the Asuka region.[41] At this early stage, one can plausibly argue that Yakushi images and other Buddhist icons were transmitted to Japan mainly from the Korean peninsula by monastic and aristocratic immigrants.[42] Buddhist scriptures, translated into Chinese from Sanskrit, were also brought to Japan and copied.[43] *Nihon shoki* states that in the fifth month of 686 there was a Yakushi sutra reading at Kawaradera 川原寺

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[40] McCallum, *Four Great Temples.* It should be noted here that the Heijō Yakushiji Yakushi triad is a Nara period image, previously believed to have been the original Fujiwarakyō Yakushiji main icon. While there were debates in the past on whether the extant Yakushiji Golden Hall Yakushi triad was the original triad made in Fujiwarakyō or made after the temple was transferred to Heijōkyō in 710, most scholars today are of the opinion that it was made after the temple was transferred, probably just after the Yōrō period (717-724).

[41] See Itō, *Yakushi nyoraizō,* pl. 34 for a photograph of the image. The temple was established by Soga Ishikawamaro in the early 640s but construction was terminated after he died in 649. Work resumed on the temple after the capital returned from Ōtsu to Asuka. See McCallum, forthcoming.

[42] See, for example, Donald F. McCallum, "The Earliest Buddhist Statues in Japan" in *Artibus Asiae* 61, no. 2 (2001): 149-188 and "Korean Influence on Early Japanese Buddhist Sculpture," *Korean Culture* 3, no. 1 (1982): 22-29. Tamura Enchō 田村圓澄, *Kodai Chōsen Bukkyō to Nihon bukkyō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1980), 1-18.

[43] On Buddhist scriptures brought into Japan and copied, see Ishida Mosaku 石田茂作, *Shakkyō yori mitaru Narachō bukkyō no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Tōyō Shorin, 1930; reprint, Tokyo: Hara Shobō, 1982).

due to Tenmu 天武 tennō's illness.[44] This record indicates that the Yakushi sutra, translated by Xuanzang in 650 CE, was known in Japan by this time.

Popularity in the Medicine Buddha continues throughout the Nara period. In Yōrō 4 (720) the Yakushi sutra was recited for one day and one night at forty eight temples in the Heijō capital, to pray for the recovery of Fujiwara no Fuhito 藤原不比等, then the Minister of the Right (659-720).[45] In Tenpyō 17 (745), Buddhist rites of repentance, known as Yakushi *keka* 悔過 were performed at various temples within the Heian capital and Seven Medicine Buddha images were commissioned, to pray for Shōmu's recovery from illness.[46] Shōmu 聖武 tennō continued to be ill-disposed, and in Tenpyō 19 (747), the temple Shin Yakushiji was vowed and the Seven Medicine Buddha images were ordered to be made. These events illustrate that worship of Yakushi was mainly to pray for the recovery of ill-disposed royal family members.

It is important to note that devotional practices of Yakushi were not limited to the upper classes, as evidence of Yakushi worship among commoners can be found in the *Nihon ryōiki* stories illustrated in an earlier section of this chapter. Since the *Nihon ryōiki* tales are legendary oral stories that were compiled by the early Heian period priest Keikai of tales that existed several centuries earlier, they cannot be completely trusted for historical accuracy. On the other hand, there is no reason to distrust the tales' depiction of the different kinds of

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[44] Suzaku 1(686-5-24) entry in *Nihongi* [Book 29, Tenmu tennō], *NKBT*, vol. 2, pp. 476-477.

[45] Yōrō 4 (720-8-2) entry in *Shoku Nihongi*. See: M.W. de Visser, *Ancient Buddhism*, vol.1 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1935), 295; *Shoku Nihongi, SNKBT*, vol. 2, pp. 76- 77.

[46] *Shoku Nihongi* (745-9-19) entry in *Shoku Nihongi*, *SNKBT*, vol. 3, pp. 16-17.

people who worshipped the Buddhist images (the tennō, aristocrats, provincial governors, villagers, soldiers, monks, nuns, farmers, landowners, and so forth) and how they performed their devotional practices (visiting temples, presenting offerings to Buddhist images, painting Buddhist images, requesting priests to conduct a sutra reading at temples, holding memorial rites for the deceased, and so forth).

The Heian period (794-1185) is one of most dazzling moments of Japan's aristocratic and religious culture. Though Kanmu 桓武 tennō (r. 781-806) succeeded in transferring the capital from Heijō 平城 (Nara) to Nagaoka 長岡 (Yamashiro province) in an attempt to shift the seat of political power in 784, in just after ten years he decided to abandon this site and build yet another new capital city in what is now known as the Kyoto basin and named it Heiankyō 平安京 "Capital of Peace and Tranquility."

There are many reasons that led to the sovereign's decision to leave Nagaoka.[47] One of the most compelling theories is that Kanmu was beset by a number of calamitous events including several unexpected deaths of family members and the outbreak of epidemics and famines which ultimately made him conclude that the place was gravely inauspicious.[48] This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three and for the time being, suffice it to say that

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[47] See Ronald P. Toby, "Why Leave Nara?: Kammu and the Transfer of the Capital" *MN* 40, no. 3 (1985): 331-347.

[48] Saeki Arikiyo 佐伯有清, *Nihon kodai no seiji to shakai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1970), 215-224, Kawakami Tasuke 川上多助, *Heianchō shi* (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1982), 32; Seki Akira 関晃, "Heian sento to Tōhoku keiro," in *Zusetsu nihon bunkashi taikei*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1956-58), 49.

for the new capital, Kanmu chose a site that was far from Heijō and near the power base of the Tenji line as well as his maternal relatives, the Hata and Haji clans.[49]

The Heian capital was modeled after the great Chinese capital of Chang'an 長安 and built in the traditional grid system. Only two monasteries, Tōji 東寺 (Eastern Temple) and Saiji 西寺 (Western Temple) were permitted within the city precinct and these were located on the southern ends. These establishments were state sponsored, established to provide official Buddhist rituals for the government. Although Tōji is known today primarily for its association with Kūkai (774-835), the founder of esoteric Buddhism in Japan, it is important to note that before its esotericization, the original main icon that was housed in its Golden Hall was a seated Yakushi Buddha image, no doubt installed to protect the newly established city from a whole range of calamities, from epidemics to malevolent spirits. It is certainly plausible that Saiji's Golden Hall also housed a Yakushi as its principal icon (*honzon* 本尊), since from Tenchō 4 (827) Kūkai put a request to the court to have forty-nine monks installed at both Tōji and Saiji to to perform Yakushi *keka* during the first month of the new year. This practice was held on every subsequent year.[50]

As Nishio Masahito argues, devotional practices related to Yakushi underwent some significant changes, particularly during Ninmyō's reign 仁明天皇 (r. 833-850). Nishio's research of the Six National Histories (六国史 *Rikkokushi*) shows that while Nara period

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[49] Toby, p. 343. This is the lineage conflict between the descendents of two royal lines, Tenmu and Tenji.

[50] Murayama Shūichi 村山修一, "Nihon no Yakushi shinkō," in *Shūgō shishōshi ronkō* (Tokyo: Hanawa Shobō, 1987), 83. Konin 4 (827) entry, *Ruiju kokushi* [fascicle 34], *SZKT*, vol. 5, p. 222.

Yakushi worship was centered on the prolonging of life and restoring the health of its royal members, in the early Heian period during the reign of Ninmyō, rituals pertaining to Yakushi were practiced to deal with larger social issues, such as epidemics. Nishio notes that the historic records on Yakushi sutra readings and rituals in the Six National Histories disappear after Jōwa 10 (843).[51] This phenomenon was undoubtedly due to the emergence of esoteric Buddhism and a whole range of powerfully apotropaic deities and rituals that were introduced to Heian society.[52] In fact, de Visser notes that the annals barely mention Yakushi Buddha's name until 1015, in the esoteric Ritual of the Seven Medicine Buddhas that was performed to cure Sanjō 三条 tennō (r.1011-1016).[53] As we shall see in Chapter Five, Yakushi briefly makes a comeback with an esoteric makeover.

5. The Canon

Canonical sources of the Medicine Buddha were transmitted to Japan by at least the late seventh century.[54] The sutras pertaining to the Medicine Buddha had a very significant

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[51] Nishio Masahito, *Yakushi shinkō – gokuku no hotoke kara onsen no hotoke e* (Tokyo: Iwata Shoin, 2000), 75.

[52] See Hayami Tasuku 速水侑. *Heian kizoku shakai to bukkyō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1975).

[53] Visser, *Ancient Buddhism,* p. 308. See also Kuroita Katsumi ed. *Ruijū kokushi* [fascicle 5], *SZKT,* vol. 5, p. 222.

[54] While the earliest extant Yakushi sutra is dated to 731, we know from *Nihon shoki,* fifth month, 24th day of the first year of Suzaku (686), Tenmu tennō was ill and the Yakushi sutra was recited at Kawaradera and a "retreat" held within the Palace to pray for his recovery.

impact when they were brought into Japan in the Nara period, which changed the nature of Buddhist worship.

There are three main Buddhist scriptures on Yakushi.[55]

1. *Yaoshi rulai benyuan jing* 藥師如来本願經, translated by Dharmagupta 達摩笈多 in 615. *T* 14, no. 449

2. *Yaoshi liuliguang rulai benyuan gongde jing* 藥師瑠璃光如来本願功徳經 translated by Xuanzang 玄奘 in 650. *T* 14, no. 450

3. *Yaoshi liuliguang qifo benyuan gongde jing* 藥師瑠璃光七佛本題功徳經 translated by Yijing 義浄 in 707. *T* 14, no. 451.

In Japan, the two most widely circulated sutras on the Medicine Buddha in the eighth and ninth centuries were *Yaoshi liuliguang rulai benyuan gongde jing* 薬師瑠璃光如来本願功徳経 translated by Xuanzang (hereafter *Hongankyō*) and *Yaoshi liuliguang qifo benyuan gongde jing* 薬師瑠璃光七仏本願功徳経 by Yijing (hereafter *Shichibutsu Yakushi kyō*).[56] Raoul Birnbaum has traced the cult of Bhaiṣajya-guru to Central Asia and parts of present-day Pakistan (such as Gilgit) where fragments or entire manuscripts of the Bhaiṣajya-guru text have been

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[55] The translation attributed to Śrīmitra 帛尸梨蜜多羅 (317-322CE), is not considered here because it is not an independent text, but rather, it is the last chapter of a collection that is known as the *Abhiseka* sutras and its authenticity is questionable (*T* 21, no. 1331). The same goes for an abridged version edited by Hui Jian 慧簡 of Liu Song (420-479) in 457 (*T* 50, no. 2145, p. 39a). Birnbaum, p. 56. See also Soper, *Early Buddhist Art*, pp. 170-171.

[56] Cynthia Bogel, "Ritual and Representation in Eighth-Century Japanese Esoteric Sculpture," (Ph.D. dissertation, 1995): 289. Bogel says this is an *esoteric* translation of the exoteric Shichibutsu Yakushi. The sutra has two components, the second part following Xuanzang's text closely but with an additional section of a series of *dhāraṇīs* expounded by Yakushi and his six Buddha brothers. Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha*, p. 70.

discovered.[57] From these findings, he concluded that several versions of the *Bhaiṣajya-guru Sutra* was in existence by the late third or early fourth century and translated into Chinese.

Xuanzang's text

Since there is Birnbaum's excellent research on these two sutras to refer to, here I will give only a brief outline of the two sutras, highlighting similarities and differences that are important in considering later Yakushi ritual practices. *Yaoshi liuliguang rulai benyuan gongde jing* 薬師琉璃光如来本願功徳経 can literally be translated as the Sutra on the Merits of the Fundamental Vows of the Master of Healing, the Lapis Lazuli Radiance Tathāgata.[58] Xuanzang, who brought the sutra back from his travels to India and Central Asia, translated this sutra from Sanskrit to Chinese in 650CE.[59] The content can be divided into four main sections:[60]

1. The twelve vows of Bhaiṣajya-guru (includes a detailed description of his Lapis Lazuli Pure Land)
2. Hearing, Recollecting, and Reciting the name Bhaiṣajya-guru and the blessings that come with it. (Includes *dhāraṇī* 陀羅尼)

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[57] Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha,* p. 60.

[58] For all titles I refer to Raoul Birnbaum's translation.

[59] Birnbaum, pp. 59-60. Birnbaum notes that versions similar to Xuanzang's text had been written in Central Asian languages including a Sogdian version and a Khotanese version. There is also a Tibetan version that was translated in the ninth century and a Mongolian version of the Xuanzang text. The Sanskrit versions, according to Birnbaum, are written in a way that suggests Central Asian or northwest Indian authorship, so he believes that the cult developed in Central Asia first, rather than India.

[60] Ibid., p. 61.

3. Description of how to conduct ritual worship of Bhaiṣajya-guru.
4. Description of the Twelve Divine Generals (*Jūnishinshō*)

The first section of the sutra describes the Pure Land where Bhaiṣajya-guru resides and the vows he made before he became a Buddha. As is typical of Buddhist scriptures, the sutra begins with Śākyamuni Buddha arriving at the city of Vaiśālī and preaching to an assembly of people under a tree. Śākyamuni then proceeds to expound on the wonders of the Lapis Lazuli Pure Land where Bhaiṣajya-guru resides. This realm, located in the eastern direction, is pure and splendidly decorated. Jeweled trees grew everywhere and the bathing pools were decorated with layers of gold, silver and precious stones. It is possible that idea of the Lapis Lazuli Pure Land was inserted to equal that of the more popular Amida Buddha and his Western Pure Land, by proponents of the Medicine Buddha Cult.[61]

When Bhaiṣajya-guru was still a Bodhisattva on his spiritual path towards enlightenment, he made vows, aspiring to save all living beings when he became a Buddha (as is the typical action of bodhisattvas). Bhaiṣajya-guru made twelve such vows, which are briefly summed up here:[62]

1. May a radiant light blaze forth from my body after enlightenment, brightening innumerable realms, and may all beings have perfect physical form, identical to my own.
2. May my body be like pure and radiant lapis lazuli, with a radiance more brilliant than the sun and moon, illuminating all who travel in darkness, enabling them to tread upon their paths.

[61] Soper, *Early Buddhist Art,* n. 28, p. 172.

[62] Birnbaum, p. 62.

3. By my limitless insight and means, may I enable all beings to obtain the necessities of life.

4. May all beings be shown the path of enlightenment, and may adherents to the sravaka and pratyekabuddha paths become established in Mahayana practices.

5. May all beings be aided to follow the precepts of moral conduct. After hearing my name, those who have broken the precepts will be aided to regain their purity and prevented from sinking to a woesome path of existence.

6. May all who are deformed or handicapped in any way have their deformities removed upon hearing my name.

7. May all who are ill be cured upon hearing my name.

8. May women who, beset by woes, seek to become men be reborn as men in their next life.

9. May all who are caught in Mara's net, entangled in negative views, be caused to gain correct views and thus practice the Bodhisattva Way.

10. May all who are to be punished by the king be freed of their troubles.

11. May those who are desperately famished be given food. May they ultimately taste the sublime Teachings.

12. May all who are destitute of clothes obtain attractive garments and various adornments upon concentrating on my name.[63]

The second section of the sutra describes how a faithful devotee of Bhaiṣajya-guru can receive blessings if he/she heard or recited his name – "Oh Lord, Medicine Master, the Lapis Lazuli Radiance Buddha." Bhaiṣajya-guru promised to come to the aid of all those who called out his name, reflected on or recited his name.

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[63] Birnbaum, p. 62.

In the third section, three special rituals associated with the worship of Bhaiṣajya-guru are expounded. The first rite is recommended by Mañjuśrī, the second by Śākyamuni and the third by the Bodhisattva Saving Deliverance救脱菩薩 (C. Jiutuo). Proper worship of Bhaiṣajya-guru urged the devotee to uphold the sutra by copying it and paying reverence to it:

> Read and recite this sutra forty-nine times. Light forty-nine lamps and make seven images of the form of that tathāgata. In front of each image arrange seven lamps. Make each lamp as a cartwheel, and for forty-nine days let their shining light ceaselessly burn. Make a five-colored, variegated banner forty-nine hand-lengths in height....Then the sick person will be able to obtain passage through danger, and he will be removed from the grasp of evil demons.[64]

Evidence for some of these practices stipulated in the scriptures can be found in *Shoku Nihongi.* During the Nara period, Kōken 孝謙 tennō (r. 749-758), a devout Buddhist, is known to have invited prominent monks to Shin Yakushiji so that they could perform the Ritual of Prolonging Life (*Zokumyō hō*続命法), where five-colored flags in honor of Bhaiṣajya-guru were put up for seven days, to pray for her indisposed father (the late Shōmu tennō). She continued to recite the *Yakushi kyō* and ordered the pardoning of prisoners.[65]

The final section of the sutra describes on the Twelve Yaksa Generals (Jūnishinshō), which will be explained in greater detail in the following section on iconography.

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[64] Ibid., p. 166.

[65] Tenpyō Shōhō 3 (751-10-23) entry. Visser, *Ancient Buddhism,* vol. 1, p. 299; *Shoku nihongi, SNKBT,* vol. 3, pp. 114-115.

Yijing's Translation

The format of Yijing's version of 707 is basically the same as Xuanzang's. The crucial difference is that instead of just Bhaiṣajya-guru, six other Medicine Buddhas and their vows are described in detail. There are also significantly more *dhāraṇīs* introduced and revealed in the latter translation, as a potent formula for invoking the protection of the Medicine Buddha and for healing.[66] Birnbaum translates the title, *Yaoshi liuliguang qifo benyuan gongde jing* 薬師琉璃光七仏本願功徳経 as, "Scripture on the Merits of the Fundamental Vows of The Seven Buddhas of Lapis Lazuli Radiance, the Masters of Healing." This scripture consists of two fascicles. Fascicle One begins with a standard Mahayana introduction (where Śākyamuni Buddha preaches to his assembly) followed by Bhaiṣajya-guru's six other Medicine Buddha manifestations (including details of their Pure Lands, and their vows). Since seven Medicine Buddhas are introduced, each with their own vows, there is a total of forty-four vows made for the benefit of living beings in this section.

The Seven Medicine Buddhas in the order in which they appear in the sutras are:[67]

1. Good Name Auspicious King Tathāgata 善名吉祥王如来.
2. Jeweled-moon Wisdom-adorned Radiating and Preaching Freely King, Tathāgata 宝月智厳光音自在王如来.
3. Golden-hued Jewel Light Marvelous Conduct Perfected Tathāgata 金色宝光妙行成就如来.
4. No Grief, Most Excellent and Auspicious Tathāgata 無憂最勝吉祥如来.
5. Dharma Sea of Thundering Sounds Tathāgata 法海雷音如来.

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[66] Birnbaum, p. 92.

[67] Ibid., p. 93.

6. Dharma Sea of Victorious Wisdom, Roaming Freely by Spiritual Powers Tathāgata 法海勝瑟戯神通如来.
7. The Buddha Master of Healing, of Lapis Lazuli Radiance Tathāgata 薬師瑠璃光如 Bhaiṣajya-guru.[68]

The second fascicle closely follows Xuanzang's text; Bhaiṣajya-guru, his Pure Land and his twelve vows are explained here. This section also introduces a series of *dhāraṇīs* expounded by Yakushi and his six Buddha manifestations, as well as the Bodhisattva Vajradhara.[69] Birnbaum states that the *dhāraṇīs* emphasized here highlight the esoteric or tantric nature of the scripture. He also adds, "It is also reasonable indication that this text is an expansion of the Xuanzang version (rather than *vice versa*), since the esoteric schools grew in popularity several centuries after the introduction of fundamental Mahayana teachings."[70]

Xuanzang's translation says, "one should make seven images in [that] tathāgata form (of Yakushi) "應造七軀彼如来像" which refers to the making of seven images of Bhaiṣajya-guru.[71] The Yijing translation says, "one should first respectfully make seven Buddha statues "應先敬造七仏形像" which refers to making images of each of the seven Medicine Buddhas mentioned in the Shichibutsu Yakushi sutra.[72]

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[68] Translations by Yui Suzuki, Buddhist Text Translation Workshop, UCLA fall quarter 2002.

[69] Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha*, p. 70.

[70] Ibid., p. 72.

[71] *T* 14, no. 450, p. 407.

[72] *T* 14, no. 451, p. 415A.

6. Iconography

This section will discuss the various iconographic types of Yakushi and his attendants as they were represented in Japan. Iconographical details on Yakushi can be derived from two medieval sources, *Asabashō* 阿娑縛抄 and *Kakuzenshō* 覚禅抄.[73] *Asabashō*, is a work of one hundred and twenty-eight fascicles compiled by Shōchō 承澄 (1205-1282) between 1242-1281. It is an authoritative compendium, dealing with various iconographies, doctrines, rituals, and oral commentaries transmitted by the Anō (穴太) branch of the Tendai sect. *Kakuzenshō*, compiled by the Shingon monk Kakuzen 覚禅 (1143-?) is a comprehensive work on rituals and iconographies of the Ono branch of the Shingon sect.

While some of the different iconographic types of Yakushi and his attendants based on these iconography manuals will be discussed, it should be emphasized that despite the great variety of iconographical types in Japan there really were only two dominant iconic forms: the seated and standing forms, both of which formed hand gesture combinations of the abhaya mudrā with the right and the holding of the medicine jar with the left. Contrary to the idea that iconography can embody specific religious and functional meanings in Japan these two iconic forms predominated over other iconographical possibilities to embody the multiple functional meanings of Yakushi in Japan. The following chapters will discuss these two iconic forms in greater depth; here, I will provide an overview of the main iconographical variations.

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[73] *Asabashō*, *TZ* 8-9, no. 3190 and *Kakuzenshō*, *TZ* 4-5, no. 3022.

A. Bodhisattva Attendants

The Yakushi sutras explain that there were two main bodhisattva leaders of Yakushi's assembly: Nikkō 日光 (Solar Radiance, Skt. Sūryaprabha or Sūryavairocana) and Gakkō bosatsu 月光 (Lunar Radiance, Skt. Candraprabha or Candravairocana). The two, together with the Medicine Buddha formed a sacred triad known in Japan as the *Yakushi sanzon* 薬師三尊.

Asabashō, quoting from a Tendai iconographical manual *Jōruri jōdohyō* 浄瑠璃浄土漂 (ca. 1028), states that Nikkō's skin is crimson-red 赤紅 and he holds the sun in his left palm and a red flower with his right. Gakkō's skin is reddish white 白紅 and he holds the moon in his left palm and a lotus flower with his right.[74] In some instances, Nikkō is sometimes found seated on a horse and Gakkō on a mount of geese.[75]

Kakuzenshō on the other hand, contains a diagram of the Yakushi triad illustrating a seated Nikkō (on viewer's right) raising both hands up to his chest and holding a solar disk (*nichirin* 日輪) with both hands while a seated Gakkō holds a lotus stem with a lunar disk (*gachirin* 月輪) nestled on the flower, and raises his left palm up to his chest.[76] *Kakuzenshō* also notes cases of a Yakushi triad consisting of Kannon and Seishi bosatsu. Sometimes Yakushi has eight bodhisattva attendants, known collectively as *hachi daibosatsu* 八大菩薩. These are Monju 文殊, Kannon 観音, Seishi 勢至, Hōdanka 宝檀華, Mujini 無尽意, Yakuō 薬王,

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[74] *Asabashō,* in *TZ* 8, p. 306a.

[75] *Besson zakki*, in *TZ* 3, p. 34, fig. 18.

[76] *Kakuzenshō*, *TZ* 5, p. 413.

Yakujō 薬上, and Miroku 弥勒. Diagrams of the great eight bodhisattva attendants appear in both *Kakuzenshō* and *Besson zakki*, [77]though I do not know of any extant sculptural representations.[78] In Japan however, the triad consisting of Yakushi Buddha and his bodhisattva attendants Nikkō 日光 and Gakkō 月光 is the most frequently found combination.[79]

In a triad, Gakkō is typically positioned to the right of Yakushi and Nikkō to his left.[80] However, the iconography of sculptural images of Nikkō and Gakkō are inconsistent, particularly in their hand gestures. In some cases, Gakkō raises his right hand and lowers his left, while Nikkō lowers the right and raises the left. In other examples such as the Yakushiji Yakushi triad (Nara), Nikkō, on the viewer's right holds the right hand up and left hand down, while Gakkō lowers the right hand down and raises the left.[81] The surest way Nikkō and Gakkō can be distinguished from each other is if they hold a lunar or solar disk in their hand; usually represented by a disk nestled on top of a long stem or as part of their

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[77] *Besson zakki*, *TZ* 3, no. 3007.

[78] *Kakuzenshō,* p. 416.

[79] Other Yakushi triad combinations include enshrining Yakushi, Amida and Shaka Buddhas together. For example a triad from Enryūji 円隆寺 consists of Amida in the center, Yakushi and Shaka on the sides. Raigōin in Kyoto combines Yakushi in the center and Shaka and Amida on the sides. These triad combinations seem to have been developed in the late Heian period.

[80] There are exceptions. For example, the Kamakura period Yōchi'in 桜池院 Yakushi Jūnishinshō painting depicts Nikkō on Yakushi's right and Gakkō on his left. Nakano, *Jūnishinshō*, p. 16, pl. 10.

[81] For photographs of the Yakushiji Yakushi triad, consult *Yakushiji*, vol. 6 of *Nara rokudaiji taikan*, ed. Nara Rokudaiji Taikan Kankōkai, revised edition, (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2000).

headdress. In the case of paintings the two bodhisattvas are easily distinguishable, since they can be identified by their red solar disk and white lunar disk.[82] In sculptural examples however, they are sometimes impossible to distinguish since the images are made symmetrically and there is no consistency in their hand gestures.

Sculptural images of Nikkō and Gakkō from the Gankōji 願興寺 seated Yakushi triad (Gifu prefecture, twelfth century) and Kōzenji 光善寺 seated Yakushi triad (Mie prefecture, twelfth century) are notable examples of Yakushi attendants holding solar/lunar disks.[83] The Gankōji Nikkō holds the end of a long stem with his left hand, placed at the side. The stem rises straight across his chest and is supported by the right hand which is raised. A solar disk resting on a cloud is on the top end of this stem. The lunar disk, held by Gakkō is arranged in exactly the same way except that the stem rests lightly on the two fingers of Gakkō's raised right hand. Similar to this is the example of the Kamakura period Yakushi triad from the Lower Daigoji Golden Hall in Kyoto.[84] In the case of the Kōzenji triad, Nikkō raises his left hand and holds a stemmed solar disk with the thumb and middle finger, while the right hand is lowered. Gakkō is exactly symmetrical to Nikkō and holds a stemmed lunar disk with the right thumb and middle finger while the left hand is lowered.

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[82] The Kamakura period painting *Yakushi sanzon Jūnishinshō zō* owned by Tōshōdaiji depicts Nikkō on the viewer's right, holding a red solar disk on his extended right hand while Gakkō holds a white lunar disk on his extended left hand. In the Yōchi'in Yakushi Jūnishinshō painting, a red solar disk decorates Nikkō's headdress while a white lunar disk decorates Gakkō's. Nakano, *Jūnishinshō*, p. 15, pl. 9 and p. 16, pl. 10 respectively.

[83] See Kuno Takeshi ed. *Butsuzō shūsei,* vol. 2 (Tokyo: Gakuseisha, 1986-97), p. 284 for the Gankōji triad and vol. 7, pp. 16-17 for the Kōzenji triad.

[84] Ibid., vol. 3., p. 240.

More commonly, Nikkō and Gakkō do not hold any objects. Extant examples from the Heian period include the Shōjōji 勝常寺 triad (Fukushima prefecture) and Kachioji 勝尾寺 triad (Osaka).[85] Generally, one of the hands is raised, palm facing forward toward the viewer while the other hand is lowered to the side. The mudrās are not entirely fixed, however, and there are small variations. For example, in the case of the Kachioji bodhisattvas, Gakkō raises the left hand, palm facing forward toward the viewer and the thumb and index fingers touch to form an "o." The right hand is lowered to the side and holds the end of his scarf. Nikkō is an exact mirror image to Gakkō, and raises his right hand and holds the scarf end with his left.

Moreover, many Heian Yakushi triads were not initially conceived of as a triad. Typically, the Yakushi image was made first and enshrined on its own, while the bodhisattvas were added later by a donor who wished to accrue certain spiritual or worldly benefits for his meritorious deed. For example, there is a well-documented case where Fujiwara no Yorimichi 藤原頼道 donated statues of Nikkō and Gakkō to the already existing Yakushi images in the Central Hall of Enryakuji 延暦寺 in Eishō 7 (1052-12-23).[86] The

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[85] *Heian jidai no chōkoku: tokubetsuten zuroku* (Tokyo: Tokyo Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, 1972), 67 for the Shōjōji Yakushi triad bodhisattvas and 97 for the Kachioji Yakushi bodhisattvas.

[86] *Sanmon dōshaki* gives the year Eisho 7, *Sanmon dōshaki, GR* 24, p. 469. *Kuin Bukkakushō, Eigaku yōki* and *Keiran shūyōshū* all say that the year was Eishō 3 (rather than Eishō 7). *Eigaku yōki* and *Kuin Bukkakushō, GR* 24, pp. 510, 570 respectively; *Keiran shūyōshū, T* 76, no. 2410. *Kuin Bukkakushō* was compiled in the late 14th century (circa 1383). Along with the *Eigaku yōki* (compiled in the 14th century), they are two of the earliest accounts on the Enryakuji complex. *Keiran shūyōshū*, also dated to the 14th century, was written by the priest Kōshū 光宗 from 1311 to 1348 on the ceremonies, regulations and oral traditions concerning Enryakuji. The exact date of *Sanmon dōshaki*'s compilation is unknown; scholars give it a 14th

Jingoji Yakushi triad was also not conceived as a triad, for Nikkō and Gakkō show very different stylistic traits from the standing Yakushi image.[87]

B. Jūnishinshō

The Jūnishinshō 十二神将 (Twelve Divine Generals) appear in the Yakushi scriptures as part of an assembly who gathered around Śākyamuni Buddha to listen to him preach about the wonders of the Medicine Buddha. The scriptures explain that these twelve semi-divine gods each commanded a legion of seven thousand yakṣa troops and vowed to save those who upheld the sutras and worshipped the Medicine Buddha from a variety of misfortunes.[88] The Twelve Divine Generals are usually represented as warriors, wearing armor and holding various weapons. Their names are: Kubira 宮毘羅 (Skt. Khumbīra), Basara 伐折羅 (Skt. Vajra), Mekira 迷企羅 (Skt. Mihira, Mekhila), Antera 安底羅 (Skt. Aṇḍīra, Antira), Manira 頞儞羅 (Skt. Anila), Santera 珊底羅(Skt. Śaṇḍira, Saṃthila), Indara 因達羅 (Skt. Indra, Indāla), Haira 波夷羅 (Skt. Pajra, Pāyila), Makora 魔虎羅(Skt. Makura, Mahāla),

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century, early 15th century dating. The account compiles Enryakuji's *engi*, the statues hosed in its worship halls and official documents pertaining to the temple complex.

87 Nagaoka Ryūsaku,"Jōgyōsō to kōkan shita sanji no reizō," *Kokuhō to rekishi no tabi* 3 (1999), 14.

88 Yakṣas are pre-Buddhist deities of ancient India who were later added to the Buddhist pantheon as protectors of the Buddhist Law and the Buddha.

Shindara 真達羅 (Skt. Sindūra, Cindālā), Shōtora 招杜羅 (Skt. Cātura, Caundhula), and Bikara 毘羯羅 (Skt. Vikarāra,Vikāla).[89]

In this dissertation, I will not be discussing the Twelve Divine Warrior images in great detail because Heian period *Jūnishinshō* images were not based on the clear iconographical models which, at earliest, came to be made in the twelfth century. For example, many extant *Jūnishinshō* images are often found wearing helmets with one of the twelve Chinese zodiac (Jūnishi 十二支) animal signs on them.[90] This identification of each warrior with the Chinese zodiac animal signs arose out of the idea that each warrior protected the twelve hours of the night and day, the twelve directions, and the twelve months. It should be noted that this was a medieval rather than a Heian period development and *Jūnishinshō* with animal sign helmets are most commonly found in post Heian examples.[91]

In fact, the iconography for the Twelve Divine warriors is not explained in any of the five Yakushi sutras, or in the esoteric Yakushi ritual manuals such as Vajrabodhi's *Yakushi nyorai kangyō giki* 薬師如来観行儀軌 or Amoghavajra's *Yakushi nyorai nenju giki* 薬師如来念誦

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[89] For a detailed study on the Twelve Divine Kings imagery in Japan, see Nakano Teruo 中野照男, *Jūnishinshōzō*, *NB* 381 (1998); Nishikawa Kyōtarō, Nishimura Kōchō, Ogawa Kōzō, et al., *Jūnishinshōzō* (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 2001).

[90] See for example the Kōfukuji East Golden Hall *Jūnishinshō* sculpted images from the early thirteenth century. Nakano, *Jūnishinshōzō*, color plate 5.

[91] Ibid., pp. 19-24. There are also Heian period examples but the helmets are post Heian restorations.

儀軌.[92] The earliest Chinese text providing information on the Twelve Divine Warriors, such as details about the attributes they hold and their skin tones, is an early fourteenth century text, *Yakushi rurikōō shichibutsu hongan kudokukyō nenju giki* 薬師瑠璃光王七仏本願功徳経念誦儀軌.[93] The earlier Japanese document that mentions *Jūnishinshō*'s various traits and attributes is *Jōruri jōdohyō* which goes back as early as the mid Heian period.[94] The iconography listed in this text is believed to be of Tendai lineage. The text explains that each general mounts an animal from the Chinese zodiac; for example, Kubira rides a tiger and Basara a rabbit. However, there are no extant images based on this text in Japan, although the black and white *Jūnishinshō* illustrations in *Nijūhachi bushū hei Jūnishinshō zu* 二十八部衆并十二神将図 appear to be based on *Jōruri jōdohyō*.[95]

Thus, the source for Heian and pre-Heian iconography of *Jūnishinshō* sculptures is uncertain and was probably based on paintings brought back from China and Korea. It should also be noted that it is very difficult to identify each of the Nara and Heian period

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[92] *T* 19, nos. 923 and 924. Vajrabodhi (d. 741) and his disciples Amoghavajra (705-774), were responsible for translating many esoteric Buddhist texts into Chinese and propagating esoteric Buddhist teachings in China.

[93] Translated by Sarahapāda 沙囉巴 (1259-1314). *T* 19, no. 925.

[94] See Nakano, *Jūnishinshōzō*, p. 21. *Jōruri jōdohyō*, *T* 19, no. 929, p. 66. Nakano says that it not clear when *Jōruri jōdohyō* was compiled but it certainly existed as early as the mid Heian period, circa 1028-1038. One source describing the iconography of the Twelve Divine Warriors as standing images wearing headdresses of animals in the Chinese zodiac is mentioned in the *Kakuzenshō* as the *Seryūfuzō* 世流布像, believed to have been illustrated by a painter names Enshin 円心(active mid 11th century); however, the scriptural sources for these illustrations are obscure.

[95] The animals and names correspond, except that the generals do not mount them as vehicles and instead wear the animals as a headdress. Nakano, *Jūnishinshō,* pp. 22-23.

Jūnishinshō sculptures without their corresponding animal signs, especially since the attributes they hold are not consistent with existing iconographical manuals. For instance, the *Jūnishinshō* clay sculptures from Shin Yakushiji dated to the eighth century have wood name tablets placed next to each image to identify them, but they were mixed up when the altar was cleaned and their identities are not entirely clear at present. Furthermore, when the images were given National Treasure status according to the former Ancient Shrines and Temples Preservation Act of 1897, their names were recorded by the Ministry of Culture but they do not match those that are recorded by the temple. One of the *Jūnishinshō* sculptures from Shin Yakushiji, well-known in Japan for having decorated the 500 yen postage stamp is identified as Mekira by the Ministry of Culture but is known as Basara at the temple.[96]

Nevertheless, there are general visual and iconographical features that the Twelve Divine Generals follow. They are usually standing and wear Central Asian military attire such as decorated breast plates, greaves and arm-guards, similar to that of the guardian kings of the four quarters (Shitennō 四天王). As protectors of Bhaiṣajya-guru and destroyers of disease and calamity, their expressions are extremely fierce. For example, their hair usually stands up like flames (*enpatsu* 焔髪), expressing intensity.

The Hōryūji Golden Hall painting on wall no. 10 depicts Bhaiṣajya-guru preaching to his assembly in his Eastern Lapis Lazuli Pure Land.[97] In this painting, we are able to find an

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[96] Nishikawa Kyōtarō 西川杏太郎, Nishimura Kōchō 西村公朝, Ogawa Kōzō 小川光三, et al., *Jūnishinshōzō* (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 2001), 53-54.

[97] These wall paintings in the Golden Hall were unfortunately destroyed by a fire in 1949. The original damaged pieces are kept in storage and reproduced panel paintings are now hung on the walls. See Itō, *Yakushi nyoraizō,* pl. 1 for a photograph of the reproduced panel.

early representation of Jūnishinshō. There are pairs of warrior-type beings standing behind Nikkō and Gakkō (four total) and they appear to represent the Twelve Divine Generals.[98] Two of them are clad in heavy armor which is the attire typically found on *Jūnishinshō* images. However, the other two are not dressed in military attire but are bare-breasted and resembles more appropriately a demon 鬼神 (yakṣa) or a celestial being 天部.[99] Similarly, the pedestal of the Yakushiji Yakushi has twelve demons without any armor, bare-breasted and wearing loincloths carved in relief, which may be early representations of *Jūnishinshō* before the advent of the presently available iconographical manuals.[100]

Heian period *Jūnishinshō* images were rarely, if ever, initially conceived as a sculptural set with Yakushi, but were usually donated at a later time by a patron and added to the already existing Yakushi or Yakushi triad. The ninth century Jingoji Yakushi image that I consider in great detail in Chapter Three, for example, is currently displayed with six Muromachi period *Jūnishinshō* images on each side of the shrine encasing the Yakushi. The eleventh century Kōryūji 広隆寺 plain wood *Jūnishinshō* images were donated to the temple, along with Nikkō and Gakkō images, by Fujiwara no Sukeyoshi.[101] In the case of Shin Yakushiji, the eighth century clay *Jūnishinshō* images surrounding the Shin Yakushiji Yakushi

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[98] Nakano, *Jūnishinshōzō*, p. 50.

[99] Ibid.

[100] On the iconography of demon-gods on the Yakushiji Yakushi pedestal, see for example, see Asanuma Takeshi 淺湫毅, "Yakushiji Kondō honzon daiza no ikei zō ni tsuite," *BG* 208 (1993): 53-71.

[101] Nakano, *Jūnishinshōzō*, pp. 68-69.

were not originally made for this temple but rather, were made for the nearby Gan'enji 岩淵寺 and later transferred to the current temple.[102]

C. Yakushi Buddha

Yakushi, whether seated or standing is generally similar to other Buddha images and can only be distinguished by the flanking attendants or by mudrās. In Japan, the Yakushi holding a medicine jar in his left palm became the single-most widely used iconography. However, there are considerable variations in the mudrās that Yakushi forms documented in the iconographical manuals. We will explore these in this section here in relation to extant images.

Yakushi with his left hand in the *segan'in* 施願印 (the fulfilling of the vow, Skt. varamudrā), and the right hand in the *semui'in* 施無畏印 (the mudrā of fearlessness, Skt. abhayamudrā).[103]

This mudrā combination is commonly found on Vairocana and Śākyamuni images. Earlier forms of Yakushi are of this iconic type. The *segan'in* 施願印 is also interchangeably known as the *yogan'in* 与願印 which means the "granting of wishes." The *semui'in* denotes the "mudrā of the absence of fear." Together, they indicate the charitable and protective nature of Yakushi Buddha.[104] Thus, many Yakushi with this mudrā combination are hard to

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[102] Ibid., p. 64. See also Mizuno Keizaburō, Yamazaki Kazuo, "*Jūnishinshō*," in *Shinyakushi-ji, Byakugō-ji, Enjō-ji* in *Yamato koji taikan*, vol. 4, Ōta Hakutaro, et al. eds. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shōten, 1977), 52.

[104] Dale E. Saunders, *Mudrā: A Study of Symbolic Gestures in Japanese Buddhist Sculpture* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1960), 51-55.

distinguish from Śākyamuni, unless accompanied by an inscription or other means of identification. The Hōryūji 法隆寺 Golden Hall seated Yakushi (after 670) is a representative example of this early form.[105] Yakushi raises his right hand with all fingers extended while the left hand is bent and palm facing outward in the wish-granting mudrā, with the little and ring finger inflected. There is nothing other than documented provenance that would distinguish this icon as a Yakushi from that of Śākyamuni. Similary, the seventh century seated Hōrinji 法輪寺 image has his right hand in the mudrā of fearlessness with all fingers extended and the left hand extended palm up, with all fingers slightly bent.[106]

Yakushi with a jewel in his left hand

Sometimes, Yakushi is known to hold an attribute known as the "priceless jewel" (Mukahōju 無價寶珠). *Dainichikyōsho* 大日経疏 explains that jewels held by Buddhas and bodhisattvas were sometimes called the "priceless jewel."[107] It is not entirely clear what this "priceless jewel" looks like, but it may be similar to the round gem (Skt. *mani*), known in Japan as the *nyoi shu* 如意珠 (Skt. cintāmani), which designates a jewel, precious stone or pearl.[108] *Asabashō* records that in the city of Zhenxi, Saichō made four Yakushi images bearing jewels in their left hands so that he could cross the seas in safety. It should also be

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[105] Itō, *Yakushi nyoraizō,* pl. 2.

[106] Ibid., pl. 3.

[107] Ibid., p. 18. *Dainichikyōsho,T* 39, no. 1796.

[108] Saunders, *Mudrā,* p. 154.

noted that the "priceless jewel" that Bhaiṣajya-guru holds in his left hand also came to be equated with the medicine container, since Bukong writes in *Yaoshi rulai niansong yigui* (薬師如来念誦儀, J. *Yakushi nyorai nenju giki*) that the Yakushi image held a medicine container in his left hand and this was named the "priceless jewel" 薬師如来像、如来左手令執薬器、亦名無価珠.[109] Furthermore, *Asabashō* notes that Myōkai 明快(the thirty-second Enryakuji abbot, 987-1070) had a copy made of the Yakushi of Enryakuji's Konpon chūdō by Saichō, and though at first the image did not hold any attributes, he had the image hold it[a jewel] because people criticized this (not having any attributes).[110]

There are quite a few Korean examples of Buddha identified as Bhaiṣajya-guru from the Three Kingdoms period that hold jewel-like attributes in the right hand.[111] This iconography did not become popular in Japan, though a few extant examples can be found. In the case of a seventh century Hakuhō period, there is a small gilt bronze Buddha triad from Yakushiji (Ishikawa prefecture), which is believed to be either an Amida or a Yakushi.[112] Since it is the main icon from a temple named after Yakushi, I believe that it is the latter deity. It is a seated image with the right hand resting lightly on the right leg, palms

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[109] *Yakushi nyorai nenju giki*, *T* 19, no. 924.

[110] "件佛本不持宝珠。人謗難之間。後令持之云々."*Asabashō*, *TZ* 8, p. 304.

[111] See for example a Three Kingdoms period standing Yakushi Buddha from the National Museum of Korean, p. 36a and a standing Yakushi from the Tokyo National Museum, p. 36b,c in Matsubara Saburō, *Kankoku kondōbutsu kenkyū: kodai Chōsen kondōbutsu no keifu* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1985).

[112] See *Kondōbutsu – Chugoku, Chosen, Nihon* (Tokyo: Tokyo National Museum 1987), 185, plate 92. Because it is possible that the bodhisattva attendants of this triad are Seishi and Kannon who typically accompany Amida Buddha, scholars have also suggested that the Buddha could be Amida.

facing down. The left hand, palm up, rests on the left knee and holds a tiny jewel between the thumb and index finger. While this iconography is very unusual, there are quite a few examples of Three Kingdoms period Korean Yakushi that hold round *cintamani* jewel type attributes in the right hand, so it was most likely copied from such Korean examples.

The seated Shichikutsuji 獅子屈寺 Yakushi image (Osaka prefecture) forms the mudrā of fearlessness with the right hand while the left hand is placed over the front chest, palm upright holding a jewel.[113] This image is dated to the tenth century and the hands are later restorations as is the jewel, but it is a rare example in Japan of a Yakushi image holding a jewel, rather than a medicine jar.

Yakushi with the mudrā of the Taihō ruri yaku'in 大宝瑠璃薬印

Jōrurijōdohyō 浄瑠璃浄土漂 recorded in the *Asabashō*, notes that some Yakushi have the right palm open and the left hand resting below the navel with the little finger inflected. *Asabashō* does not provide a diagram for this mudrā and from the explanation it is not possible to discern what the hand gestures look like. Another source states that Yakushi holds a jar which contains *agada* medicine, a precious medicine of India. The jar is made out of blue semi-precious stone (lapis lazuli, according to Birnbaum).[114]

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[113] Itō, *Yakushi nyoraizō,* pl. 84.

[114] *Asabashō*, *TZ* 8, p. 305a.

Image bearing the jō-in 定印 (Skt. dhyānamudrā)

This mudrā, known as the "gesture of concentration" is frequently found on Chinese Wei dynasty statues, but is rarely found in Japan.[115] It is also more commonly found on seated statues than standing ones.[116] Both hands rest on the lap below the navel. The right hand rests on the left hand with palms up; the thumbs touch each other. Among the few examples in Japan, there is the Kamakura period seated Yakushi from Jōshōji 常勝寺 in Hyōgo prefecture, Gakuonji 覚園寺 Yakushi from Kanagawa prefecture and a Muromachi period gilt-gold lacquered Yakushi from Eizanji 榮山寺, Nara.[117]

Image bearing the *ōjin seppō'in/ chikichijō'in* 応身説法印・智吉祥印

This mudrā symbolizes the predication of the Dharma and is a gesture characteristic of Śākyamuni Buddha known as the *chikichijō'in*.[118] The Yakushiji Golden Hall Yakushi (circa 720) can be found with this particular hand gesture.[119] The right hand is raised up, palms

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115 Saunders, *Mudrā*, p. 86.

116 Ibid., p. 85. Saunders, quoting Serge Elisséeff, notes that this mudrā is called the *yakko-in* 薬器印 when it is Yakushi that makes this gesture. The deity holds a medicine bowl in his two hands and sometimes there is no bowl; the hands lying in the lap in such a way indicates the presence of the medicine container. Saunders, *Mudrā*, n. 11, p. 144.

117 Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei*, vol. 7, pl. 390 for the Jōshōji image, vol. 1, pl. 41 for Gakuonji, and vol. 6, pl. 48 for Eizanji.

118 Saunders, *Mudrā*, p. 101; Akiyama Shōkai, *Butsuzō inzō daijiten* (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1985), 242-243.

119 Itō, *Yakushi nyoraizō*, pl. 5.

facing the viewer, with the tips of the thumb and index finger touching to form a circle. The left hand rest on the left knee, palms facing up, with the middle finger slightly bent upward.

Image holding a *hachi* 鉢 and *shakujō* 錫丈

Kakuzenshō mentions Yakushi in seated posture, holding a bowl (J. *hachi* 鉢, Skt. Pātra) in his left hand and a sistrum in his right.[120] The *hachi* symbolized an alms bowl, a small vessel used by mendicant Buddhist priests to collect offerings from devotees, and a characteristic attribute of Buddha images.[121] This Yakushi type can frequently be found on Dunhuang wall paintings but interestingly, it never became popular in Japan.[122] *Besson Zakki* 別尊雑記 contains a Yakushi triad where Yakushi holds a sistrum in his right hand and an alms bowl in his left and rides an elephant, while one of his bodhisattva attendants mounts a horse and the other sits on a pedestal carried by several geese.[123]

Image with a medicine jar in the left hand

The most common form of Yakushi statues from the Heian period is one that forms the fear-not mudrā with his right hand and holds a medicine jar in his left palm. The sutras

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[120] *Kakuzenshō*, *TZ* 5, p. 48a.

[121] Saunders, *Mudrā*, p. 143.

[122] For images of Yakushi holding a sistrum and medicine bowl, see Luo Huaqing 羅華慶 ed., *Zun xiang hua juan, Dunhuang shi ku kuan ji*, vol. 2 (Hong Kong: Shang wu yin shu guan, 2002), Pl. 52, Cave no. 322 Yakushi triad (early Tang); Pl. 54, Cave no. 205, South wall Yakushi flanked by Jizō and Kannon (High Tang); Pl. 55 Cave no. 446, West Wall Standing Yakushi (High Tang); and Pl. 56 Cave no. 446, North end of east wall (Mid Tang).

[123] *Besson zakki* [fascicle 4], *TZ* 3, fig. 18, p. 34.

do not discuss Yakushi's specific iconography, and it is the translation by Tang esoteric master Amoghavajra of the esoteric rituals pertaining to Bhaiṣajya-guru, *Yakushi nyorai nenju giki* which first mentions that Yakushi held a "container of medicine薬器" in his left hand. Nothing further is elaborated on this. Raoul Birnbaum states that the standard depiction is the Medicine Master holding a lapis lazuli bowl of *amṛta*, the sweet nectar of enlightenment. In other cases, the Buddha holds a myrobalan, a healing fruit in his right hand.[124]

Yakushi nyorai nenju giki 薬師如来念誦儀軌 brought to Japan by Kūkai,[125] describes in more detail the iconography of Yakushi. The *giki* states, for example, that the Yakushi Buddha image used in ritual worship should hold a medicine pot in his left hand and the right hand should make the gesture of the *sankai'in* 三界印 (Binding of the Threefold World).[126] This reveals why Yakushi holding medicine containers became more prevalent after the ninth century, while earlier Nara period images did not hold a medicine jar in their left hands (e.g. Yakushiji Yakushi, Tōshōdaiji Golden Hall Yakushi). Itō Shirō's research has revealed that while depictions of Bhaiṣajya-guru in China and Korea frequently held alms bowls 鉢, this was not the case with the Japanese examples.[127] Rather, there were basically two standard types of containers held by Yakushi in Japan, the *tsubo* 壺 (jar with a neck) and the

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[124] Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha*,pp. 83-84.

[125] Abe Ryūichi, *The Weaving of Mantra: Kūkai and the Establishment of Esoteric Buddhist Discourse* (University of Columbia Press, 1999), n. 86, p. 354.

[126] Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha*, p. 88; *T* 19, no. 924a, p. 29b.

[127] For Korean examples from Unified Silla, see Hwang Su-yŏng 黄壽永，Sŏkpul 石佛, *7000 yŏn Hanguk munhwa yusan kukpo* 7000 年韓國文化遺産國寶 Seoul: Yegyŏng Sanŏpsa, 1985), plate 79, p. 143.

en 鋺 (lidded metal bowl).[128] Itō traces these two kinds of containers to actual examples of medicine receptacles found in the Shōsōin 正倉院 collection of treasures.[129]

According to Sherry Fowler, *Sōjishō* 總持抄, a manual compiled by the Tendai prelate Chōgō 澄豪 (1259-1350), notes that Yakushi images holding medicine jars began to circulate around the time of Chōnen 奝然 (? – 1016).[130] Moreover, Itō suggests that this iconographical development embodied specific Japanese tastes and demonstrated that Yakushi in Japan first developed as a deity associated with the curing of disease and illnesses, rather than rebirth in his Lapis Lazuli Pure Land, which is quite often illustrated in Dunhuang walls. This is very interesting because it reveals that the actual meaning of these containers, used specifically for medicinal purposes, were incorporated into the iconography of Yakushi images in Japan.[131] Here, there is a conscious decision to have Yakushi hold real medicine jars rather than idealized containers and we can see very clearly that people identified Yakushi as a healer of illness. In the later chapters, I will discuss how the rituals and religious functions of Yakushi change and diversify over time from the Nara and

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[128] There are a few rare examples from the eighth or ninth century, such as the Shōjuraigōji 聖衆来迎寺 Yakushi. See *Kondōbutsu – Chugoku, Chosen, Nihon* (Tokyo: Tokyo National Museum 1987), plate 196.

[129] For examples of medicine jars and pot from Shōsōin, see Shōsōin jimusho ed., *Shōsōin hōmotsu,* (kitagura) vol. 3 (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1962), pls. 99 and 100 (medicine jar) and pl. 101 (medicine bowl).

[130] Sherry D. Fowler, *Murōji: Rearranging Art and History at a Japanese Buddhist Temple* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 177; Sōjishō, *T* 77, no. 2412 [fascicle 1], p.56b.

[131] Itō Shirō, "Yakushi nyoraizō no yakki," in *Heian jidai chōkokushi no kenkyū* (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 2000), 297.

throughout the Heian periods, but it is interesting that the medicine jar in the left hand, combined with the "fear-not" mudrā with the right, became the dominant iconography representing all aspects of Yakushi's diverse powers. Yakushi, thus came to be identified as a deity that cured diseases, but also prevented calamities, warded off strange apparitions (*mononoke* 物怪), and bestowed good crops. Furthermore, we will see in Chapter Five how among the nobility during the mid to late Heian period, Yakushi became regarded as a deity who could assist women in difficult childbirth.

7. Summary

Yakushi worship took root in Japan from the seventh century, continuing throughout the Nara period, peaking in the early Heian. While its popularity appears to have waned in the late tenth century, overshadowed by both esoteric Buddhism and the rise in popularity in Amida Buddha and his Western Pure Land, Yakushi worship continued to flourish among the court nobles and royal members, facilitated by the Tendai sect, that was successful in esotericizing Yakushi and developing new rituals.

In this chapter, we have discussed the reasons why research on Yakushi images is an important contribution to various disciplines: Japanese history, art history, and Buddhist studies. A brief history of the development of the devotional cult from the seventh century was outlined, in relation to extant images. Furthermore, I provided some theoretical discussions on "icon" and "ritual" since these two issues form the conceptual backbone of the dissertation.

As for actual religious practices, sutra-reading and recitation were important ritual components in the early devotional worship of Yakushi as was the creation and enshrining

of its images. During the Hakuhō and Nara periods, healing grave illnesses was the most important characteristic of the cult.

Though there are four main editions of scriptures on Yakushi, Xuanzang's and Yijing's translations were the ones most frequently employed for the purposes of ritual practices (copying, reading, chanting). As for the images, though there is a great variety of iconographical types known in Japan among religious circles and recorded in depth in their ritual compendia, the seated and standing image with the mudrā combination of "fear-not" with the right, and the holding of a medicine jar with the left became a standardized visual representation of Bhaiṣajya-guru in Japan from the late Nara and throughout Heian period, and this tradition continues to this day.

CHAPTER TWO

The Standing Yakushi Icon Type: Enryakuji Central Hall Yakushi

1. Introduction

As Bernard Faure has noted, one means by which Buddhist icons are animated is by the "transmission" of the efficacy of an established powerful icon to one or more new icons.[1] In other words, an icon is able to maintain its sanctity by the relation it has to the original image. In this chapter I will examine the early history of Enryakuji 延暦寺, the Tendai mountain temple complex on Mt. Hiei 比叡山 in Shiga prefecture, and the production of Yakushi images at the Konpon chūdō 根本中堂 (Central Hall). Specifically, I reconstruct the standing Yakushi statue said to have been carved by the temple's founder Saichō 最澄 (767-822; "Saichō's Yakushi" hereafter) and demonstrate that this image was an auspicious prototype for standing Yakushi; one that was repeatedly copied and housed in many temples, greatly popularizing the worship of this deity.

Many fires destroyed parts of Enryakuji during its long history, but it was ultimately the Genki 2 (1571) fire when all of the images in the Konpon chūdō were completely lost.[2]

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[1] Bernard Faure, *Visions of Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 247.

[2] The Konpon chūdō experienced fires in Jōhei 5 (935), Kenmu 2 (1335), Eikyō 7 (1435), Meihō 8 (1499), and Genki 2 (1571). Mōri Hisashi states that Saichō's Yakushi and the set of Seven Medicine Buddhas, both secret images, were probably destroyed in the fire of 1435. See Mōri Hisashi 毛利久, "Genki izen no Enryakuji Konpon Chūdō to anchi butsuzō," in *Nihon butsuzōshi kenkyū* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1980), 83-85, first published in *Kokuhō Enryakuji Konpon chūdō oyobi juyō bunkazai kairō shūri kōji hōkokusho* (Tokyo: Kokuhō Enryakuji Konpon Chūdō Shūri Jimusho, 1955).

The Konpon chūdō that stands today was built in Kan'ei 19 (1642). Though the original Yakushi images housed in the Konpon chūdō are lost forever, there are a number of written records that allow one to piece together, however fragmentary, some knowledge of the images, what they may have looked like and who commissioned them.

Creating a composite of Yakushi statues from the Konpon chūdō can be a rather tricky endeavor, especially when the objects being "pieced" together are no longer extant. In his study of the Zenkōji Amida triad, Donald F. McCallum faced a similar problem of providing a descriptive analysis of the icon because the original triad housed at Zenkōji is a secret icon (*hibutsu* 秘仏) never displayed to the general public. He states, "For this reason, our only access to its appearance is through textual sources and the numerous replications; consequently the following is a generalized and idealized description based on this material…"[3] Similarly, while I can only provide a generalized description of the kinds of images that were housed at the Konpon chūdō, I believe that the risk is worth taking, for as this chapter and the next will demonstrate, reconstructing a composite of these lost images, though somewhat collaged, will allow us to see Heian Yakushi worship and icon veneration in a completely new perspective.[4]

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[3] McCallum, *Zenkōji*, p. 208.

[4] For a discussion on Enryakuji Yakushi images enshrined in the *Ichijō shikan-in* 一乗止観院, see Shimizu Zenzō 清水善三, "Heian zenki ni okeru Tendai chōkoku no tenkai," in Ueyama Shunpei 上山春平 ed., *Tendai bijutsu no shosō* (Kyoto: Bukkyo Bijutsu Kenkyū Ueno Kinen Zaidan Josei Kenkyūkai, 1988) and also Shimizu Zenzō, *Heian chōkokushi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1996), 91-98. See also Mōri, "Enryakuji Konpon chūdō," pp. 81-100.

2. Buddhist statuary of the Tendai (Enryakuji) lineage

Typically, a survey of art in the Heian period begins with a description of the establishment of the new capital at Heian, then the development of two new Buddhist sects: Shingon 真言 and Tendai 天台 with headquarters at Tōji 東寺 and Enryakuji, respectively. This is followed by a discussion of "Shingon" or "esoteric" art, namely the esoteric Buddhist sculptures and mandalas from Tōji, but there is almost no mention of "Tendai art" from the early Heian period and its description is limited to the rise of Pure Land Buddhism and art after the tenth century.[5]

Even though Enryakuji was one of the most powerful religious institutions throughout the Heian and Kamakura periods and was chiefly responsible for new developments in Buddhist statuary both in terms of style and iconography, this tendency for art historians to ignore Tendai art is chiefly due to the fact that the temple complex experienced a series of fires that destroyed many of the original buildings and images, as well as documentary materials. An examination of Tendai Buddhist statuary is necessary in order to understand the proper context with in which Yakushi worship was disseminated; I will argue that Enryakuji was actually responsible for many religious and artistic innovations in the development of Buddhist statuary during the Heian period.

This development can be loosely categorized into three phases. The first was in the early ninth century (during and immediately after Saichō's time). The second, that saw

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[5] A recent publication of the *Nihon no bijutsu* journal series by Iwasa Mitsuharu, *Heian jidai zenki no chōkoku: ichiboku chō no tenkai*, in *NB* 457 (2004) has finally included sections that deal with sculptures made in the single-wood block technique in both the Shingon and Tendai lineages.

innovative icon production was in the second half of the ninth century, with the incorporation of esoteric Buddhist art that Enryakuji priests Ennin 円仁(794-864) and Enchin 円珍(814-891) brought from Tang China.[6] The third phase, from the tenth century onwards, witnessed the continuing usage of styles and iconographies from the two prior phases.[7]

In this chapter, the discussion on the Enryakuji Konpon chūdō Yakushi is mostly concerned with the early ninth century, when this icon type was formed. Mōri Hisashi was one of the first scholars to emphasize the importance of Enryakuji and Tendai art in early Heian Buddhist art history, particularly the art historical significance of the Konpon chūdō Yakushi images, and his scholarship often involved a close reading and analysis of textual sources. In the article "Genki izen no Enryakuji Konpon chūdō to anchi butsuzō" (The Buddhist statues housed at the Konpon chūdō of Enryakuji before the Genki period), Mōri examined a variety of written sources including *Eizan yōki, Enryakuji kenritsu engi, Eizan taishiden, Sanmon dōshaki, Ichidai yōki, Jie daishishden,* and *Tendai zasuki,* in order to reconstruct the history of the Konpon chūdō and the Buddhist statues it housed prior to the Genki 2 (1571) fire.

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[6] Ennin was a disciple of Saichō who traveled to China in 838 until 847. He became the third Tendai abbot (座主 *zasu*) and is posthumously known as Jikaku daishi 慈覚大師. Enchin studied in China from 853-858 and became the fifth Tendai *zasu* in 868.

[7] Kuno Takeshi, "Heian shoki ni okeru Enryakuji no butsuzō," *BK* 260 (1968): 129. This article was also reprinted in Kuno Takeshi, *Heian shoki chōkokushi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1974), 99-122.

In another article, Mōri remarks that images often enshrined in Tendai temples historically included the deities Shaka 釈迦 (Skt. Śākyamuni), Amida 阿弥陀 (Amitābha), Kannon 観音(Avalokiteśvara), Monju 文殊 (Mañjuśrī) and Fugen 普賢(Samantabhadra), all deities that appear in the Lotus Sutra, the core of Tendai faith.[8] For example, Amida Buddha has a special connection to the Tendai faith because he is the principal deity of their Constant-walking Meditation (*jōgyō zanmai* 常行三昧) practices where *nenbutsu* 念仏 were chanted in front of the icon to pray for rebirth in his Pure Land. Monju was the *honzon* of the Monju hall at *Ichijō shikan'in* 一乗止観院 of Enryakuji from the early times of the temple's founding, and was closely associated with Ennin., Fugen appears in the last chapter of the Lotus Sutra and is also the principal deity of Lotus Meditation (*Hokke zanmai* 法華三昧) practices. Yakushi however, though very widely worshipped in Tendai temples, does not appear in the Lotus Sutra. As I will demonstrate in the following sections, the religious significance of Yakushi to the Tendai sect is to be found in Saichō's personal affinity with Yakushi.

Tendai art was also examined extensively by Shimizu Zenzō. His numerous works examined both the stylistic and iconographical development of statuary developed by the Tendai establishment during the early Heian period.[9] Shimizu divided the development of

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[8] Mōri Hisashi, "Tendai chōkoku no shushusō," in *Nihon butsuzōshi kenkyū* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1980), 210-218, first published in *Hieizan* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1971); Mōri, "Enryakuji Konpon chūdō," pp. 81-100.

[9] Shimizu Zenzō, "Tendai no Yakushizō," *Nihon bijutsu kōgei* 435 (1974): 34-42; "Tendai chōkoku no tenkai," pp. 7-10; "Heian zenki ni okeru Enryakuji no chōkoku," *BG* 172 (1987): 25-47, also reproduced in *Heian chōkokushi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan,

Tendai art into four main categories: (1) Ninth century Yakushi images that were once enshrined in the Konpon chūdō (2) Tenth century sculptures that were made in the earlier orthodox style (3) Sculptures from the newer halls at Enryakuji (e.g. Shakadō 釈迦堂) that reflected newer, current styles from the capital, and (4) sculptures influenced by esoteric iconography from the continent.

Shimizu's 1974 work was dedicated exclusively to Yakushi Buddha images within the Tendai lineage (*Tendai no Yakushizō*), thereby underscoring the great influence of the Enryakuji Tendai tradition in the production of Yakushi statuary. In the first section of this article, Shimizu, like his predecessor Kuno and Mōri, reconstructed the history of the ten Yakushi images that were enshrined in the Konpon chūdō. Though the Tendai sect is better known for its promotion of Amidism by Genshin 源信 (942-1017), Shimizu showed that worship of Yakushi was an earlier, equally important component of Heian religious history.

In the second part of the article, Shimizu examined extant Heian Yakushi statues that were clearly modeled after the Konpon chūdō Yakushi images and referred to them as the "Tendai-style" Yakushi (*Tendai no Yakushi zō* 天台の薬師像). He looked at both standing and seated Yakushi images from the mid tenth to early eleventh century that he believed were produced and housed at Tendai temples. Because Enryakuji was extremely powerful during the mid Heian period, he argued that they were able to successfully promote the devotional worship of Yakushi across the country. The standing Yakushi statues housed in the Konpon chūdō became the "prototype" from which many copies were produced at Tendai temples.

1996), 91-120. "Enryakuji ni okeru Tendai bijutsu no tenkai," in *Bukkyō bijutsushi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1997), 261-274.

Among the Heian images said to have been based on the Konpon chūdō prototype is the Murōji Kondō Yakushi 室生寺金堂薬師 which, according to Shimizu, was made in the likeness of Saichō's Konpon chūdō Yakushi image.[10] In his corpus, Shimizu included the Hōkaiji 法界寺 Yakushi of Kyoto, Matsumushidera 松虫寺 of Chiba (set of seven), Hōkōji 法光寺, and the Hōbodai'in 宝菩提院 standing Yakushi, Kyoto as extant Heian period Yakushi modeled after the Konpon chūdō Shichibutsu Yakushi.[11] These images were carved out of a single block of wood, had rather flat bodies, and were either made in the pure wood style or had some traces of polychrome, the inner robe forming a "wave pattern" (*sazanami*) at the feet.

Shimizu also included a separate category of "Tendai-style" Yakushi which he referred to as the *zuhatsu ichidan* 頭髪一段 style Yakushi. These are Yakushi images not related to the Konpon chūdō prototype, including seated images such as the Rokuharamitsuji 六波羅蜜寺 Kyoto, Nanmyōji 南明寺 in Nara, Zensuiji 善水寺 in Shiga.[12] There are also standing images at Chōgenji 長源寺 Kyoto and Jūmanji 充満寺 in Shiga.[13] For example, the Rokuharamitsuji Yakushi is characterized by a head with a gentle sloping fleshy

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[10] Iwasa Mitsuharu, *Heian jidai zenki no chōkoku*, *NB* 457 (2004), fig. 20.

[11] For photographic reference to these images, see Kuno Takeshi ed. *Butsuzō shūsei*, vol. 3, pl. 245 for the Hōkaiji Yakushi, pl. 264 for the Hōbodai'in Yakushi. *Butsuzō shūsei* vol. 4, pl. 290 for the Hōkōji image, vol. 1, pl. 201 for the Matsumushidera set.

[12] Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei*, vol. 3, pl. 185 (Rokuharamitsuji image); vol. 4, pl. 235 (Zensuiji image).

[13] Ibid., vol. 3, pl. 89 (Chōgenji); vol. 4, pl. 365 (Jūmanji).

protuberance (*nikkei* 肉髻, Skt. *uṣṇīṣa*), rather than an acutely protruding one,[14] while the hairline appears to also form a gentle curve down to the sides of the ears rather than at an acute angle. The Yakushi's face is round with thin, crescent moon shaped eyes and the drapery folds of his monk's attire form thick lines that are bunched up in the abdomen area.[15]

Kuno Takeshi recognized the importance Enryakuji for the subsequent development of Buddhist statuary, both in stylistic and iconographical terms.[16] He states that during the early Heian period, Buddhist images were created at Enryakuji and Tōji, under the leadership of Saichō and Kūkai respectively, but there was a great difference between the two religious centers in regards to how and where their sculptures were produced. Tōji was the most important state-sponsored temple in the Heian capital, whereas Enryakuji, located in the northeast mountains just outside the city, was a very small, private temple originally called Hieizanji 比叡山寺. The halls and pagodas built there were much smaller in scale than those at Tōji and so Kuno surmised that the images housed in them were also modest in size. There were significant technical and stylistic differences between the Buddhist statuary produced at Tōji and Enryakuji: Tōji's images were made by sculptors who were once affiliated with the state-sponsored Official Buddhist Workshop of Nara while the Enryakuji

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14 *Nikkei* 肉髻 is one of the thirty-two auspicious markings of the Buddha.

15 *Honpashiki* 翻波式 can be translated as "Rolling-wave pattern," a pattern of pleats where drapery folds are cut deep with alternating ridges of high and low. This alternation of convex and concave ridges creates an effect of breaking waves.

16 Kuno, "Enryakuji no butsuzō," pp. 115-140.

Konpon chūdō images were probably made by a different lineage of sculptors who worked with wood in the single-wood block technique (*ichiboku zukuri* 一木造り), rather than lacquer or clay.[17]

While the Golden Hall at Tōji enshrined a Yakushi as its principal icon (*honzon*), this image was made prior to the advent of Kūkai (774-835), the founder of the Shingon sect in Japan. Under his guidance and influence, esoteric deities such as Dainichi 大日 (Skt. Vairocana) and Fudō 不動 (Acalanātha) came to be enshrined in Tōji's lecture hall. In contrast, the images enshrined at Enryakuji during the time of Saichō and his disciple Gishin were all deities that had been popular from the eighth century, such as Yakushi, Shaka, Tahō 多宝 (Skt. Prabhūtaratna), Monju, Fugen, Miroku (Maitreya), and Bishamonten 毘沙門天 (Vaiśravaṇa).[18] While Tōji's images were mostly made of wood-core dry-lacquer following

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[17] *Ichiboku zukuri* is a sculptural technique where a statue is carved out of a single block of wood. In earlier images, cavities were not hollowed out of the back of the sculpture, which caused cracking. Later *ichiboku* images were made with the back hollowed out, to prevent this. Kuno contends that sculptors from this second group consisted of those who are repeatedly mentioned in the *Nihon ryōiki*. These were mainly priests and mountain ascetics (non-professional sculptors) residing at mountain temples who made wooden figures from sacred blocks of wood. He believes that they are from the same lineage of sculptors who created the Jingoji Yakushi image. While I agree with Kuno's idea that the Enryakuji Konpon chūdō Yakushi was made by a sculptor from a different lineage than the Official Buddhist Workshop, I am skeptical that the Jingoji Yakushi was made by a non-professional sculptor (i.e. the residing priest or mountain ascetic) based on the high level of workmanship that can be observed (more on the Jingoji Yakushi image itself in the next chapter). Other scholars have suggested that the sculptor who designed the Jingoji Yakushi came from a lineage of sculptors who were responsible for the Tōshōdaiji wood sculpture group. See Nakano Genzō 中野玄三, "Hasseiki kōhan ni okeru mokusei hassei no haikei," *BG* 54 (1964): 31, also reprinted in *Keka no geijutsu* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan), 33-62; Asai Kazuharu 浅井和春, "Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte IV," *Museum* 388 (1983): 22.

[18] Gishin 義真 (781-833) was appointed the first Tendai abbot of Enryakuji after Saichō's death.

the style of the Official Buddhist Sculpture Workshop, Enryakuji's (Hieizanji) early images were made in the plain-wood style from a local Buddhist sculpture workshop (though Kuno never provides any evidence of a local, private Buddhist sculpture workshop). As we saw, in the late ninth century, Enryakuji was actively adopting esoteric practices and iconography that Ennin and Enchin had brought back from their travels in Tang China. Moreover, by this time Enryakuji was receiving state and aristocratic patronage which enabled the production of many large-scale esoteric images, such as Godaison 五大尊, Hannya bosatsu 般若菩薩 of one *jo* (roughly 3 meters) or more.

3. Early History of Enryakuji and Konpon chūdō

Eigaku yōki states that in Enryaku 4 (785), Saichō climbed Mount Hiei and built a small thatched hut to practice Buddhism.[19] The account goes on to state that in Enryaku 7 (788), he carved a statue of Yakushi Buddha and installed it in a small worship hall, Konpon ichijō shikan'in 根本一乗止観院. By the 790s, there were three worship halls, the Yakushidō, Monjudō, and Kyōzō 経蔵 (Library). The entries from Jōgan 1 (859-9-25) in both *Sanmon dōshaki* and *Kuin bukkakushō* confirm that the Yakushi Hall, Monju Hall and Library were three separate buildings, each five bays wide.[20] The size of the Yakushi Hall was

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[19] *Eigaku yōki*, in *GR* 24, p. 507b. An exact date of compilation is not known, but it is believed to have been compiled sometime in the fourteenth century. It includes written accounts of various events pertaining to Enryakuji, including the establishment of key buildings, biographical summaries of high-ranking monks and description of Buddhist ceremonies.

[20] *Kuin bukkakushō*, *GR* 24, p. 573a. *Sanmon dōshaki*, *GR* 24, p. 470a. "Five bays wide" (*Goken* 五間) refers to the number of intervals between the columns (in this case, there would be 6

approximately 10 meters long, 4.7 meters wide and 3.6 meters tall. Similarly, the Monju Hall was approximately 10 meter long, 4.8 meters wide and 3.6 meters high. The Library was the same size as the Monju Hall. The fourteenth century accounts of Enryakuji, *Kuin bukkakushō* and *Eigaku yōki*, both note that the dedication ceremonies for the Monju Hall were held on Enryaku 12 (793-1-1) and Enryaku 13 (794-9-3) for the Yakushi hall. Thus, Mōri suggests that the 793-794 dedication of these worship halls marked the official establishment of the Enryakuji complex.

Matsuura Masaaki postulates that the main worship hall, consisting of the Yakushi hall, Monju hall and Library was established as the Ichijō shikan'in between Enryaku 16-17 (797-798) because an entry in the *Eizan daishiden* 叡山大師傳 from Enryaku 20 (801) states that a Lotus Sutra Lecture was held at Mt. Hiei's Ichijō shikan'in, indicating that this building existed prior to 801.[21]

According to Mōri, at some point, the Ichijō shikan'in came to be referred to as the "Konpon chūdō," though it is not entirely clear when this transition occurred. He explains that the name Konpon ichijō shikan'in already appeared in the Jōwa 2 (835) entry in *Enryakuji kenritsu engi* 延暦寺建立縁起, suggesting that the term *Konpon* was already being used by 835.[22] Furthermore, according to Mōri, *Kuin bukkakushō* states that the name Konpon chūdō was given to this worship hall in Kōnin 14 (823) when Enryakuji received

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columns).

[21] Matsuura Masaaki 松浦正昭, "Tendai Yakushizō no seiritsu to tenkai," *Bijutsushi gaku* 15 (1993): 21.

[22] Mōri, "Enryakuji konpon chūdō," p. 82.

official recognition, but it is not entirely clear from where *Kuin bukkakushō* got this information.[23]

As mentioned earlier, the Konpon chūdō was comprised of three separate buildings: the Yakushi Hall, Monju Hall and Library, all of which had closely matching roof heights. *Sanmon dōshaki* states that between Gangyō 6 and Ninna 3 (882 to 887), the three buildings were remodeled into one building joined by one roof. The building measured 9 bays long, 4 bays deep and the Yakushidō occupied the five bays in the center of the now joined buildings while the Sutra Repository occupied the 2 bays in the southern end and the Monju Hall occupied the 2 bays in the north. This was at the time Enchin 円珍 (also known as Chishō daishi 智証大師) was abbot of Enryakuji (868-891).

According to Mōri's research, in Jōhei 5 (935-3-6) a fire burned down more than forty buildings at Enryakuji, including the Konpon chūdō.[24] The hall was rebuilt and completed three years later, in Tengyō 1 (938-10). As it turned out, Son'i 尊意 (866-940), the abbot at the time, died before it could be formally dedicated and subsequent Enryakuji abbots were too busy to take on the responsibility. It took another 42 years, during Ryōgen's 良源 abbacy, for the Konpon chūdō to be formally dedicated, in Tengen 3 (980).[25]

The rebuilding of the Konpon chūdō back in 938 resulted in a much smaller and less convenient structure (from the 9 bay long structure) so Ryōgen made plans to add a corridor

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[23] Ibid.; *Kuin bukkakushō, GR* 24, p. 570b.

[24] *Fusō ryakki, KT* 12, p. 212 gives the date of the fire as Jōhei 6 (936-3-6). Other sources give the 935 date.

[25] Ibid., p. 83.

(*horō* 歩廊) and surrounding walkways (*kōrō* 広廊). Construction for these additions began from Tengen 1 (978). Furthermore, Ryōgen designated the central 7 bays as the Yakushi Hall, the northern 2 bays as the Monju Hall and the southern 2 bays as the Taishidō, and this made the Yakushi Hall larger (by 2 bays) than before the fire of 935 (total: 11 bays wide). Mōri remarks that the present-day Konpon chūdō is very similar in scale to the one from Ryōgen's time.[26]

4. Yakushi Icons in the Main Sanctuary

A. Saichō's Yakushi

Saichō was from the area of Furuchigō 古市郷 in the province of Ōmi, and scholars postulate he was born in Tenpyō Jingo 2 (766).[27] His father, Mitsu no Obito Momoe 三津首百枝, was a devout Buddhist. At the age of twelve, Saichō went to study under the monk Gyōhyō 行表 at Ōmi Kokubunji, where he mainly studied Yuishiki doctrines and Zen meditation techniques. He also mastered the Lotus Sutra, *Konkōmyō Saishōō kyō* 金光明最勝王経, *Kongō Hannya kyō* 金剛般若経 and *Yakushi kyō* 薬師経.

Saichō became a novice at age fourteen and received the government certificate confirming his new status (*doen* 度縁) when he reached seventeen. In Enryaku 4 (785), at age

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[26] Mōri, "Enryakuji konpon chūdō," p. 83.

[27] Saichō's biography is based on 2 major works: the *Eizan daishiden* (Biography of the Great Teacher of Mt. Hiei) and *Denjutsu isshinkaimon* by his disciple Kōjō 光定. For a discussion on these two primary sources as well as a summary of Saichō's early years, see Paul Groner, *Saichō: The Establishment of the Japanese Tendai School* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 17-26. Furthermore, the date of Saichō's birth (766 or 767) has been a point of some controversy. For details, see Groner, *Saichō*, pp. 19-20.

nineteen, he went to Tōdaiji in Nara to become fully ordained, after which he underwent a training period in the 250 precepts which lasted several months. Upon completion, Saichō left Nara and retreated to Mt. Hiei where he set up a small thatched hut to practice Buddhism. Three years later, he converted his little hut into a worship hall, carved an image of Yakushi Buddha with his own hands and enshrined it there.[28] Though *Sanmon dōshaki* states that Saichō's Yakushi was made in Enryaku 7 (788), Matsuura Takaaki believes that since *Eizan daishiden* (dated circa 825 and a much earlier source than *Sanmon dōshaki*) makes no mention of this date, it is unlikely that the Yakushi was made so early in Enryakuji's history. Instead, he believes that Saichō's Yakushi was made and housed in the Ichijō shinkan'in around Enryaku 16-17 (797-798), around the same time Saichō completed his Buddhist canon library (Issai kyōzō).[29]

Putting the discrepancies in dating aside, an early ninth century written source confirms that Saichō's Yakushi did indeed exist from a relatively early time as the principal icon of the Konpon chūdō. Enchō's 円澄 (771-837) biography in *Genkō shakusho* 元亨釈書 notes that in Daidō 1 (806-11-23), Saichō conferred the bodhisattva precepts to over a hundred disciples in front of the "Yakushi image in the Shikan'in"止観院薬師像前.[30] Furthermore, the three-fascicle essay, *Denjutsu isshin kaimon* 伝述一心戒文 written by Saichō's

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[28] *Sanmon dōshaki* notes that at the beginning, the temple that Saichō built on Mt. Hiei was called Hieizanji. Later, it was called Ichijōshikan'in which then came to be called Chūdō, or Konpon chūdō. *Sanmon dōshaki*, *GR* 24, p. 468b.

[29] Matsuura, "Tendai yakushizō," p. 21-22.

[30] Ibid. See also Enchō, *Genkō shakusho* 元亨釈書 [fasc.2], in *KT* 31, p. 54; *Genkō shakusho* was written in Genkō 2 (1322). Enchō became the second Enryakuji abbot, after Gishin.

disciple Kōjō (779-858) around Jōwa 1 (834) states that the Tendai annual ordinands (*nenbun dosha* 年分度者) were to be examined in front of the Konpon chūdō Yakushi.[31]

Eigaku yōki states that the Yakushi image enshrined in the Konpon chūdō stood five *shaku* five *sun* tall (*goshaku gosun* 五尺五寸, roughly corresponding to 167centimeters) and that Saichō sculpted it himself. The salient question that must be asked here is, "Why did Saichō chose the deity Yakushi as his principal icon for his main worship hall on Mt. Hiei?" As scholars have noted, it would seem to make more sense if Saichō enshrined Buddhist deities who played prominent roles in the Lotus Sutra, the most esteemed of teachings in Tendai thought and philosophy. So why was Yakushi the first image Saichō housed in his main worship hall?

Yakushi as *zuizō*

This section examines the question of why the Medicine Buddha held such a special meaning for Saichō in his personal life.[32] Paul Groner has suggested that during Saichō's early years of training to be a Buddhist monk, he had extensively studied the Medicine Buddha Sutra, and therefore had a personal affinity with this deity.[33] Saichō in fact had to

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[31] Kōjō 光定, *Denjutsu isshinkaimon* 傳述一心戒文, in *Dengyō Daishi zenshū* 傳教大師全集, *bekkan* 別巻, (Tokyo: Tendaishū Shūten Kankōkai, 1912), 202.

[32] Shimizu, "Tendai bijutsu no tenkai," p. 262.

[33] Groner, *Saichō*, p. 30.

study the Medicine Buddha Sutra in preparation for his ordination exam but this does not fully explain why he dedicated an image of the Yakushi deity in his main worship hall.[34]

The following section is largely informed by Matsuura Masaaki's work, who offers some insight for Saichō's decision in choosing Yakushi; he suggests that Saichō derived his iconographical sources for the standing Yakushi image from one of Ganjin's "auspicious images" (*zuizō* 瑞像), several of which Ganjin was known to have brought to Japan from China, including a Yakushi *zuizō*. These are mentioned in the account of Ganjin's trip to Japan, *Tōdaiwajō tōseiden* 東大和上東征伝.[35] According to Ning Qiang, *zuizō* (C. *ruixiang*) are "Buddhist icons, created in India and in other regions that are closely associated with a specific place and a story or stories. The locations and the legends surrounding such icons establish individual identities for them."[36] Ganjin 鑑真 (C. Jianzhen, 688-763) was most famous in Japan for teaching the correct practice of the *Sifenlü* 四分律 precepts but he was also the first to propagate Tiantai 天台 teachings in Japan.[37] Matsuura points out that

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[34] Saeki, pp. 32-33. Saeki states that *Yakushi kyō* was one of several sutras Saichō had to study for his ordination. Other sutras included the Lotus Sutra, *Saishōō kyō* and *Kongō Hannya kyō*.

[35] Matsuura, "Tendai yakushizō," pp. 17-38; Ishida Mizumaro 石田端麿, *Ganjin: sono kairitsu shisō* (Tokyo: Daizō Shuppansha, 1974), 313-314. Ganjin brought back auspicious images of the Buddhas Yakushi, Amida and the bodhisattva Miroku.

[36] Ning Qiang, *Art, Religion, and Politics in Medieval China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), 82.

[37] *Sifenlü* 四分律 was the *vinaya* of the Dharmagupta School, used by the *Lü* 律 (J. *Ritsu*) sect in China and Japan. *Tiantai* 天台 (J. Tendai), one of the thirteen Chinese Buddhist sects, was founded by Zhiyi 智顗 (538-597), based upon the Lotus Sutra teachings. In Japan, it was Saichō who established the sect on Mt. Hiei.

Saichō's choice for making a Medicine Buddha to install in his main worship hall was a natural choice, since he emulated Ganjin and was clearly influenced by his teachings.

Saichō is known to have gained access to the Tendai texts that Ganjin had brought to Japan.[38] Dōchū 道忠, one of Ganjin's principal disciples, may have played a major role in Saichō's acquisition of these texts, which may have included details on making an auspicious Yakushi icon.[39] It is unlikely that Dōchū and Saichō ever met, but they certainly knew of each other since Dōchū was one of Saichō's greatest benefactors, donating as many as 2000 fascicles of important texts to Saichō as well as sending his own disciple to study under Saichō.[40] Dōchū was also a contemporary of Nyohō 如宝, another disciple of Ganjin who had accompanied Ganjin from China to Japan; Nyohō was also the presiding precepts master 戒和上 when Saichō was fully ordained at Tōdaiji.[41]

Nyohō is also credited with overseeing the production of the Tōshōdaiji standing Yakushi image in the Golden Hall.[42] While the Yakushi is not a plain-wood image, nor life-

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[38] Groner, *Saichō*, p. 7.

[39] Dōchū's exact dates are unknown. He is speculated to have lived sometime between 735-800.

[40] Dōchū sent his prized disciple Enchō, who later became the second abbot of Enryakuji. See Groner, *Saichō*, p. 32.

[41] Matsuura, "Tendai yakushizō," p. 19.

[42] Nyohō 如宝 directed many of the sculpture and building construction projects of Tōshōdaiji after Ganjin's death, including the Thousand-armed Kannon and Yakushi of the main hall, as well as other wood and wood-core dry lacquer statues from the Tōshōdaiji complex. Samuel C. Morse, "The Formation of the Plain-Wood Style and the Development of Japanese Buddhist Sculpture: 760-840" (Ph.D. dissertation: Harvard University, 1985), p. 113. See Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei*, vol. 5, pl. 20 for a photograph of the image.

size (it is a wood-core dry lacquer image and stands 3.36 m tall), it is important to note that both the Tōshōdaiji and Enryakuji Yakushi images were standing figures which did not hold medicine jars in their left hands, and they were also made around the exact same time period.[43] In any case, Matsuura believes it was highly possible that Saichō knew about the Tōshōdaiji Yakushi through his correspondence with Nyohō, and that he may have been inspired to make his own Yakushi from his knowledge of the Tōshōdaiji Yakushi and Ganjin's personal *zuizō* Yakushi.

Matsuura believes that both the Tōshōdaiji and Enryakuji Yakushi were modeled after the *zuizō* Yakushi that Ganjin brought to Japan, which in turn was based on several sandalwood icon traditions in Tang China.[44] The most famous example of an auspicious Buddha image is the Buddha (Śākyamuni) statue that was commissioned by King Udayana of Kauśambī from ox-head sandalwood (*sendan* 栴檀). In *The Great Dynasty Record of the Western Regions* (大唐西域記) which records the Tripitaka master Xuanzang's pilgrimage from China through Central Asia to India (629-645), Xuanzang recounts the time he reached the Central Asian kingdom of Kauśambī and encountered a sandalwood Buddha image commissioned by King Udayana. He stated that this image:

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[43] Around Enryaku 16, 17(797-798). The Golden Hall Yakushi can be dated to after 796 (Enryaku 15) because one of the three coins placed in the image's hand is inscribed with "Ryūhei eihō," 隆平永宝 a coin first minted in Enryaku 15 (796) until Kōnin 9 (818). See also *Tōshōdaiji*, in *Nara rokudaiji taikan*, [revised edition] vol. 13 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2001), pp. 10, 24-25.

[44] Matsuura, "Tendai yakushizō," p. 26. On sandalwood imagery, see: Morse, "Plain-Wood Style," pp. 149-151.

> ...often shows spiritual signs and emits a divine light from time to time. The kings of various countries, relying upon their might, wished to lift it up, but they could not move it, although a large number of people were employed to do so. Then they had pictures of the image produced for worship, and each of them claimed that his picture was true to life. Speaking about the origin of the image, it is said that when the Tathātgata, after having realized full enlightenment, went up to the Trayastrimśa Heaven to preach the Dharma to his mother, the king was eager to see him and wished to make a likeness of him. Then he requested the Venerable Maudgalyāyana to transport by supernatural power an artisan to the heavenly palace to observe the fine features of the Buddha, and the artisan carved an image of him in sandalwood.[45]

Xuanzang wrote detailed accounts of 'auspicious images' that were worshipped in India and Central Asia in *The Great Dynasty Record of The Western Regions.* He was also known to have brought back a variety of gold, silver, and sandalwood images from his travels. Matsuura surmises that Ganjin's worship of his 'auspicious Yakushi image' stemmed from these kinds of image-worshipping practices that were popular in Tang China.[46]

The Udayana Buddha image was thus considered an auspicious icon and often copied. Ennin, in his diary *Record of a Pilgrimage to China in Search of the Law* 入唐求法巡礼行記, writes of visiting a monastery called Kaiyuansi 開元寺 in Yangzhou (where Ganjin once resided, in present day Jiangsu). There was a building in this temple complex known as the "Pavilion of the Flying Auspicious Images" 瑞像飛閣 because it was believed that during the time of Yangdi of Sui, four sandalwood images of the Buddha Śākyamuni flew from India to

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[45] Xuanzang, *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions* [fascicle 5], Li Rongxi trans., (Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1996), 160-161.

[46] Matsuura, "Tendai yakushizō," pp. 24-25.

the pavilion, and Yangdi himself made a plaque with the characters *Ruixiang feige* 瑞像飛閣 and had it hung in front of the building.[47]

In this section, I will present an analysis of Saichō's Yakushi by considering some of its prominent features and its religious significance. Many written sources specifically mention Saichō carving a Yakushi Buddha image with his own hands, including documents from the tenth century, such as *Tengen sannen Chūdō kuyō ganmon* 天元三年中堂供養願文 of Tengen 3 (980) and *Sanbōe* 三宝絵 of Eikan 2 (984).[48] However, there is no actual record of Saichō ever learning this skill himself, and he probably commissioned an artisan to make it under his supervision.[49] We may assume this because there are other instances where priests are said to have created Buddhist images, but in fact merely commissioned them. For example, the Tōshōdaiji Golden Hall Vairocana image has three names carved on the inside of the *shita shikinasu*[50] (round section) of the pedestal, one of them which says "A novice of the Buddhist order, Jōfuku 沙弥浄福," believed to have been a Tōshōdaiji priest.[51] The Tōji Shingon priest, Eri 会理 is known for making the Kami Daigoji Yakushi 上醍醐寺薬師 and

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[47] Edwin O. Reischauer, *Ennin's Diary: The Record of a Pilgrimage to China in Search of the Law* (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1955), 49.

[48] Saeki, p. 95. Other medieval sources such as the *Fusō ryakki* and *Sanmon dōshaki* also mention that Saichō carved the Yakushi image himself. For an English translation of *Sanbōe* see Edward Kamens, *The Three Jewels: A Translation and Study of Minamoto Tamenori's Sambōe* (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1988), 254.

[49] Kuno,"Enryakuji no butsuzō" pp. 116-117.

[50] *Shita shikinasu* 下敷茄子 is the round section of the pedestal between the flower platter (*keban* 華盤) and the supporting pedestal (*ukeza* 受座).

[51] Sugiyama Jirō 杉山次郎, *Tenpyō chōkoku*, *NB* 15, (1967), 70-71.

the Tōji Dining Hall Senju Kannon 東寺食堂千手観音.[52] It is unlikely that these priests actually took a chisel in hand and sculpted the images themselves, but rather, were probably involved in closely supervising the artisans that actually made them.

Shimizu Zenzō also suggests that Saichō's Yakushi was made by one of his disciples with a skill in sculpting or by a local professional sculptor.[53] In any case, both Kuno and Shimizu propose that it was made by an individual or individuals who were not affiliated with the Official Buddhist Sculpture Workshop. Other than the Yakushi images in the Konpon chūdō, sources relate that there were also Monju, Fugen and Bishamonten statues in the Monjudō and a Tahō Buddha in the *Hokke zanmaidō* enshrined during Saichō's lifetime. These were all small-scale images around 3 *shaku* tall (about one meter) and their modest size suggests that they were made by local sculptors (or even resident monks who knew how to carve Buddhist images). Like the Konpon chūdō Yakushi, the Bishamonten in the Monjudō is said to have been made from a piece of fallen wood by Saichō.

The narrative of Saichō fashioning the Yakushi out of wood illustrates a new trend in statue-making during the turn of the ninth century, both in the material used for the icon and the technique used to fashion it. Saichō's contemporary Kūkai, was known to have supervised the making of the Tōji Lecture Hall sculptures in the Tenpyō orthodox style of lacquered wood by sculptors who had worked in the Official Buddhist Sculpture Workshop (*kanji zōbutsusho* 官寺造仏所). In contrast, Saichō's Yakushi was made from a single block of

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[52] Medieval sources just note, "It is said that the priest Eri made it (the statue)"会理僧都作云々. For more information on Eri's career, see Shimizu Zenzō, *Heian chōkokushi*, 355-384.

[53] Shimizu, *Heian chōkokushi,* p. 103.

wood and purportedly "made by Saichō himself" 自造. This symbolically epitomizes the statue as something that was very personal to him.[54] It also clearly indicates a very different tradition from the early eighth century where images were usually made out of dry-lacquer and clay.

Sanmon dōshaki relates the story of Saichō's Yakushi in a typical *setsuwa* 説話 (narrative) manner:

> "Concerning the establishment of [Hieizanji] in the seventh year of Enryaku, Senior Earth Day of the Dragon (*Tsuchinoe no tatsu*), by Dengyō daishi [Saichō]. [He] chopped a tree that had fallen on its own accord in Kokūzōo 虚空蔵尾. [He] used this wood to sculpt one image of Yakushi with his own hands." 延暦七年戊辰伝教大師建立者。伐虚空蔵尾自刻倒之木。以本切自手彫刻薬師像一軀.[55]

This particular narrative provides us with more detail for understanding the sacredness of the original wood employed. First, Saichō used a piece of wood from a place called Kokuzōo. Kokuzōo was a 'sacred' valley situated in the Eastern Pagoda area of Enryakuji, just northeast of the Konpon chūdō, where the morning star (*myōjō* 明星) purportedly descended from the sky when Saichō performed an esoteric ritual there called the *Gumonjihō* 求聞持法.[56] It was also noted as the place Saichō first established his thatched

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[54] *Eigaku yōki*, *GR* 24, p. 509b.

[55] *Sanmon dōshaki*, *GR* 24, p. 468b.

[56] An esoteric meditation ritual dedicated to the bodhisattva Kokūzō 虚空蔵, believed to strengthen memory.

hut.[57] Second, Saichō used wood that had fallen on its own accord, probably from natural causes, such as lightning or wind. Kuno notes that this is an example of *reiki shinkō* 霊木信仰, an indigenous form of belief and practice where people believed that certain trees embodied a kind of spiritual force, or *numen*. One such example from the mid ninth century is the Tōji Hachiman triad, where all three images are made out of the same decayed tree trunk of a Japanese cypress (*hinoki* 檜).[58]

Closely associated to this idea of numinous wood is the tradition of *danzō* 檀像, Buddhist images made of sandalwood or other aromatic, high-quality wood. The *danzō* tradition was introduced from Tang China during the eighth century.[59] According to a legend recorded in *Zōitsu Agon kyō* 増一阿含經 (Skt. *Ekottarāgama Sutra*), the "first" image of the Buddha was made by King Udayana of Kauśambī from a piece of ox-head sandalwood (*sendan* 栴檀) and it was five *shaku* high (approximately 152 centimeters, or five Tang Chinese feet). It should be emphasized that this height of *goshaku* 五尺 has deep religious significance. Both Saichō's Yakushi and the Seiryōji Shaka 清凉寺釈迦, which I consider to be iconic prototypes of *danzō*, were in this height range, the former being *goshaku gosun* 五尺五寸 and the latter being *goshaku*.[60] In any event, the Udayana tradition was introduced to Japan through Buddhist texts, and the legend of the first image marked the beginning of the

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[57] *Shiga-ken no chimei*, in *Rekishi chimei taikei*, vol. 25 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1991), 189.

[58] See Christine Guth Kanda, *Shinzō: Hachiman Imagery and its Development* (Cambridge Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 1985), 52.

[59] Kuno, *Heian shoki chōkokushi,* vol. 2, pp. 259-262.

[60] See Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei,* vol. 3, pl. 66 for a photography of the Seiryōji Shaka.

practice of conferring high sanctity to unpainted statues carved from aromatic woods throughout East Asia.[61]

The sandalwood tradition is also stipulated in the Eleven-headed Kannon commentary (C. *Yishimian shen zhou xinjing yi shu* 十一面神咒心経義疏), which sanctioned the use of *byakudan* 白檀 (*Santalum album*) for making a statue of the deity.[62] The commentary goes on to explain that when *byakudan* was not available, one should employ *haku* 栢 (*Cupressaceous*) as a substitute.[63] In Tang China, where *byakudan* did not grow, *haku* was indeed substituted to make sandalwood images. The significance of using rare, high-quality aromatic wood had practical benefits of purifying the air with its pleasing scent, rendering it particularly potent and spiritually efficacious.[64] By the ninth and tenth centuries, the term *danzō* came to include unpainted, plain-wood images in general.[65]

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[61] Samuel C. Morse, "The Standing Image of Yakushi at Jingo-ji and the Formation of the Plain-Wood Style," in *Archives of Asian Art* 40 (1987): 37-38.

[62] At least two translations of this sutra were known in Japan by the 730s. For the *Jūichimen shinju shingyō gisho* 十一面神咒心経義疏, see *T* 39, no. 1802.

[63] "問若無白檀之國者為何木作像也。答若依方法者。必求白檀而作像也。若以義門而推者。若求而不得者亦以柏木作像也." The Buddha was asked, "If there is no white sandalwood, what type of wood should people in this country use to make an image?" He replied, "White sandalwood should be used to make an image. If sandalwood is not available, then use *bomu* wood to make the image." *T* 39, no. 1802, p. 1010b. On the discussion of *haku* wood, see Morse, 'Plain-Wood Style," pp. 197-198.

[64] Asai, "Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte III," p. 13 and footnote 89.

[65] This tradition was introduced into Japan through Buddhist texts. Of *danzō* images made in Japan, images of Yakushi, Shaka and Jūichimen Kannon were the most numerous. For studies on *danzō* images in Japan, see Mōri Hisashi, "Heian jidai no danzō ni tsuite," in *Nihon bukkyō chōkokushi no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1970): 134-145; Kuno Takeshi, "Danzōyō chokoku no keifu," *BG* 43 (1960) also reprinted in *Heian shoki chokokushi no kenkyū* (1974),

What is noteworthy about this tradition is that it was introduced to Japan by Ganjin, and indigenous and abundant *kaya* 榧(*torreya nucifera*) came to replace the rare *byakudan*.[66] The Tōshōdaiji wood-core images are made from *kaya* and it is possible that Saichō's Yakushi was also made from this type of wood. According to another narrative found in *Menju kuketsu* 面授口訣, Ninchū 仁忠, a disciple of Saichō, asked his master what kind of numinous wood was used for the principal icon of the *Ichijō shikan'in*. To this, Saichō replied that in the middle of the forest there was a strange and wondrous tree with greenish-white leaves and luxuriant branches .... even though it was a kind of *kashiwa* 槲, he did not know what exactly it was.[67] Ninchū writes the *kashiwa* tree that Saichō was referring to was identical to *kashiwa* 柏. Matsuura suggests it was a broad-leaved tree and possibly the *katsura* 桂, which was used as a substitute in Japan for white sandalwood.[68] Iwasa Mitsuharu, while agreeing for the most part with Matsuura, suggests that since Saichō found the numinous tree growing in a *ryūrin* 劉林, it was a forest of trees with leaves that were "thin, sparse and scattered" (one meaning of 劉). Thus, he believes that the forest was predominantly made up of deciduous trees that had lost their leaves in winter, and that the miraculous tree Saichō encountered was an

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259-280. See also: Suzuki Yoshihiro 鈴木善博, "Hakuki to danzō chōkoku," *Bijutsushi* 107 (1979): 15-35; Inoue Tadashi 井上正, "Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō to sono shūhen," in *Domon Ken* 土門拳*: Nihon no chokoku 2: Heianki* (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1980), 174-185.

[66] Kaneko Hiroaki 金子啓明, Iwasa Mitsuharu 岩佐光晴, et al. "Nihon kodai ni okeru mokuchōzō no jushu to yōzaikan II-hachi kyūseki o chūshin ni," (日本古代における木彫像の樹種と用材観 II－八・九世紀を中心に) *Museum* 583 (2003): 5.

[67] "劉林之中有一奇樹、茎葉青白枝条滋茂－中略－雖類於槲、未知何木," in *Menju kuketsu* 面授口訣." *Dengyō Daishi zenshū*, vol. 5 (reprint, Tokyo: Sekai Seiten Kankōkai, 1985), 1.

[68] Matsuura, "Tendai yakushizō," p. 27.

evergreen, with pale green leaves, stems, and thick branches. Iwasa raises the possibility that this evergreen was *kaya* (Japanese nutmeg).[69] In either case, whether the wood used to make Saichō's Yakushi was *kaya* or *katsura*, it was intended to be made into an auspicious sandalwood image, as its height of *goshaku gosun* corresponds to the height of the original ox-head 5 foot sandalwood Shaka image.

It is also important to note that stories found in *Sanmon dōshaki* for example, were clearly intended to relate the idea of a divinely animated image, as the text continues:

> Daishi [Saichō] made vows in which he prayed to benefit the living. The aforementioned statue nodded its head to save all sentient beings, just as a living Buddha [would]. How can it be called a wooden image? (大師發誓願而祈利生。件像揺頭而諸済衆如生佛。詎謂木像矣).[70]

Adorning the Image

To reiterate, Saichō's Yakushi was *goshaku gosun* 五尺五寸, a life-size image around 167 centimeters tall, originally unpainted wood which Gishin had gold applied on the body of the image and polychrome applied on the robe, in accordance to Saichō's last words.[71] *Keiran shūyōshū* 渓嵐拾葉集 describes the polychrome in more detail: the outer robe (*kesa* 袈裟) was painted red with circular lotus 文蓮圓 patterns in *kirikane* 切金(decorative patterns

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[69] Iwasa, "Heian jidai zenki no chōkoku," p. 51.

[70] *Sanmon dōshaki*, *GR* 24, p. 468b.

[71] *Eigaku yōki*, *GR* 24, p. 509. 安置薬師像。立高五尺五寸。身金色。衣文彩色。傳教大師自造。依先大師遺言修禅大師自金色衣文彩色云々。

made by applying cut pieces of gold foil on the surface), the underside of the outer robe painted greenish-blue.[72]

The practice of adorning the image with bright colors and gold ornamentation is rooted in the Buddhist idea of *sōgon* 荘厳 (C. *zhuangyan*, Skt. *alamkara*). The character can be interpreted as "sanctification through a wealth of splendor" and allows Buddhist icons to be not only embodiments of sacred ideas but also "as manifestations of the Buddhist faith's essence in its utmost spiritual adornment."[73] In particular, the use of gold on Buddhist images was one of the highest notions of sublime adornment. According to Brinker, there were three levels of meaning in the use of gold ornamentation on Buddhist icons. First, it alluded to the material quality of gold as a precious, shiny metal. The second was an ontological notion of the Buddha's noble body as golden, pure and immaculate. Thirdly, the adornments (colors, gold, jewelry, halos, attributes) served a religious function of relating sensual beauty to the beholder which ultimately embodied abstract notions of purity, immaculate brightness and radiant awakening.[74]

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[72] *Keiran shūyōshū*, *T* 76, 851b. 身金色。衣文彩色。頭光五枚。身光七枚。金色身像打間青色。御袈裟色赤。裏青。文蓮圓也。御坐寶蓮花。寶蓮花者花間莊玉也。*Keiran shūyōshū*, compiled by the Hieizan monk Kōshū between 1311 -1348, recording the various ceremonies and oral transmission of Enryakuji; extant volumes amount to a total of 113 scrolls. See also: Kuno, "Enraykuji no butsuzō," pp. 117-118.

[73] Helmut Brinker, "Sublime Adornment: Kirikane in Chinese Buddhist Sculpture" *Orientations* 34, no. 10 (2003): 30. See also Dietrich Seckel, *Buddhist Art of East Asia* (Bellingham, Washington: Western Washington University, 1989), 184.

[74] Brinker, "Sublime Adornment,"p. 30.

This practice of applying polychrome and gold on sandalwood images is derived from religious practices in Central Asia and China during the mid Tang dynasty (781-847).[75] In his *Great Tang Dynasty Record* (fascicle 12), Xuanzang traveled to the city of Bhīmā, where he saw a standing sandalwood image of Buddha which emitted light from time to time. The people believed that this image was made by King Udayana of Kauśambī, when the Buddha Śākyamuni was still alive. After his death, it flew over to the northern part of the country (Gostana, where Bhīmā is located) and was worshipped by the people there. Sick and diseased people covered the image with cut gold in the areas that corresponded with their own ailments and prayed for good health and recovery from illnesses.[76]

The mural painting #231 (West Wall Niche 西壁龕) from Dunhuang illustrates a standing Buddha that is accompanied by a caption that reads, "Auspicious image from the Walled City of Bhīmā" 于闐坎城瑞像. In this painting, the Buddha wears a red outer robe and a blue-green inner robe and *dhoti* (skirt).[77] Buddha images donning red outer and blue-

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[75] Gilding and painting on sixth century limestone sculptures have been recently discovered in Qingzhou, Shandong province. For details on these images, see Brinker, "Sublime Adornment,"pp. 31- 32.

[76] Matsuura, "Tendai yakushizō," p. 28. See also Xuanzang, *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions,* Li Rongxi trans. (Berkeley: Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai and Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1996), p. 386.

[77] Matsuura, "Tendai yakushizō," p. 28. For more detail on the "Auspicious image from the Walled City of Bhīmā," see Sun Xiushen 孫修身, "Bakukōkutsu no engi setsuwa ga," in *Tonkō bakukōkutsu,* vol. 4 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1980-1982), pp. 240-241 and fig. 11. According to scholars, Utenkanjō 于闐坎城 refers to the city of 捍麼城 which corresponds to the city of Bhīmā in the *Great Tang Dynasty Record.*

green inner robes are fairly common at Dunhuang, as in the example of an early Tang standing Yakushi from a mural in cave 322 (southern side, eastern wall).[78]

It is interesting to note that the adornment of the Seiryōji Shaka is similar to the description of Saichō's Yakushi. The former has traces of gilt on the body and polychrome (touches of red on the outer robe, blue-green on the inner robe, greenish blue on the skirt), matching (in principle) the auspicious Buddha image from Dunhuang cave 231.[79] Moreover, the Shaka image shows hints of decorative circular lotus patterns in cut gold-leaf applied on the outer robe, a motif which Matsuura traces back to the Tang dynasty.[80]

In fact, Matsuura suggests that while Saichō and Gishin never reached the famous Kaiyuansi 開元寺 in Yangzhou province, home of the auspicious "flying" Shaka image, it is quite possible that they learned about this famous Buddha since Kaiyuansi was not so far a distance from Taizhou (now Zhejiang province), where Saichō and Gishin had once resided. Furthermore, the Seiryōji Shaka was a copy that the monk Chōnen had made from a sandalwood Udayana Shaka image at a temple in Taizhou which was also called Kaiyuansi.

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[78] Luo Huaqing ed., *Zun xiang hua juan*, in *Dunhuang shi ku kuan ji*, vol. 2 (Hongkong: Shang wu yin shu guan, 2002), 65, plate 52.

[79] Matsuura, "Tendai yakushizō," p. 28. See also Itō Shirō 伊藤史朗, *Heian jidai chōkokushi no kenkyū* (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 2000), 133.

[80] Ibid., p. 29. Matsuura says that this kind of surface decoration of circular lotus patterns 蓮華状円文 in cut gold can be found on the Buddha and bodhisattva relief images inside a portable shrine 諸尊仏龕 from Hōonji 報恩寺 in Kyoto dated to the late Tang, early Sung dynasty. Circular floral patterns in cut gold can also be found on Seiryōji-style Shaka images from Mimurododera 三室戸寺 in Kyoto from the early Kamakura period, and Byōdōji 平等寺, Kyoto, dated ca 1213 which not only has the circular patterns but is also polychromed in red for the outside robe and blue used on the undergarment.

According to *Shōrai Taishūroku* 将来台州録, both Saichō and Gishin received instruction on Tiantai teachings at this temple and so they may have learned about the religious practice of polychroming auspicious images there.[81] This sheds some light on why Saichō instructed Gishin in his will to have gold and polychrome adorned on his plain-wood Yakushi icon.

Saichō's Yakushi as *hibutsu*

Another feature of Saichō's Yakushi that contributed to its spiritual aura was the fact that it was a *hibutsu* 秘仏, a secret icon and therefore almost never displayed publicly. Sherry Fowler explains that this practice seems to have developed in the ninth century with the rise of esoteric Buddhist sects.[82] While the practice of keeping sacred images as secret icons behind closed doors or curtains appears in Heian period documents, it should also be noted that the term *hibutsu* probably developed later in the medieval period.[83]

As for Saichō's Yakushi, it is not clear when it became a secret icon. As mentioned before, the ninth century document *Denjutsu isshin kaimon,* mentions that examinations for yearly ordinands should be held in front of the Yakushi image and *Genko shakusho* states that in Daidō 1 (806-11-23), over one hundred monks received the bodhisattva precepts in front

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[81] When Saichō and Gishin were in China, this temple was known as Longxingsi 竜興寺 and by the time Enchin's visited the place, it had been renamed Kaiyuansi. Matsuura, pp. 28-29.

[82] Sherry D. Fowler, "Hibutsu: Secret Buddhist Image of Japan" *Journal of Asian Culture*, vol.15 (1991-1992): 150-151. See also Kuno Takeshi, "Hibutsu kaichō" *Kobijutsu* 39 (1972): 114-116 and Lucie Weinstein. "The Yumedono Kannon: Problems in Seventh-Century Sculpture," *Archives of Asian Art* 42 (1989): 25-48.

[83] Fabio Rambelli, "Secret Buddhas: The Limits of Buddhist Representation." *Monumenta Nipponica* 57:3 (2002): 274-275.

of the Konpon chūdō Yakushi image.[84] This suggests that at least during Saichō's time, the image was not yet kept secret, and it was most likely hidden away after Saichō's death to further enhance its *spiritual magnetism*.[85]

Though we do not have diagrams depicting how the icon was arranged in the Konpon chūdō from the early ninth century, a diagram in *Kuin bukkakushō* shows how Saichō's Yakushi (indicated by the characters "wood Buddha"木佛) was enshrined in the inner sanctuary (*naijin* 内陣) of the hall from the time of Jien 慈円 (1155 -1225; also known posthumously as Jichin 慈鎮).[86] Saichō's Yakushi and a set of Seven Medicine Buddhas are enclosed within curtains 御帳, and next to the diagram, there is a note that states that Jichin had arranged the Yakushi images in this way. The Yakushi's bodhisattva attendants, Nikkō and Gakkō, are placed directly outside the curtains on the east side, while the two other standing Yakushi, the Four Heavenly Kings (*Shitennō* 四天王), Bonten 梵天 and Taishakuten 帝釈天 are placed on the north and south sides.

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[84] Matsuura, "Tendai yakushizō," pp. 21-22. See also Kōjō 光定, *Denjutsu isshin kaimon*, *Dengyō Daishi zenshū*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Tendaishū Shūten Kankōkai, 1912), 22; *Genko shakusho* [Enchō 円澄 section], *KT* 31, p. 54: "大同元年十一月二十三日。教於止観院薬師佛前。率数百人受圓頓菩薩大戒."

[85] *Spiritual magnetism* is a term coined by James Preston to refer to sacred pilgrimage sites, but I find it useful to describe the process by which a site (in this case, an object) was "sanctified." According to Preston, spiritual magnetism was not based on an intrinsic quality of sacredness but rather, it was derived "from human concepts and values, via historical, geographical, social and other forces that coalesce in a sacred center." James Preston, "Spiritual Magnetism: An Organizing Principle for the Study of Pilgrimage," in *Sacred Journeys: The Anthology of Pilgrimage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 33.

[86] *Kuin bukkakushō, GR* 24, p. 572a.

Asabashō also provides us with an earlier diagram of the icons arranged in the inner sanctuary.[87] It shows a rectangular room with a smaller rectangular inner sanctuary marked off by curtains. Placed on the north and south sides of this inner sanctuary, are Four Heavenly Kings (two on each side) and two Yakushi Buddha images (one on each side). The caption for the diagram mentions the name of the priest Keimyō 慶命 (965-1038), as well as a set of Twelve Divine Generals which were donated to the Konpon chūdō in Jian 1 (1022) by Fujiwara Michinaga 藤原道長.[88] Mōri contends that the arrangement of the Konpon chūdō icons in the *Asabashō* diagram corresponds to the period just after the Twelve Divine Generals were donated in 1028 and before 1038, the year Keimyō died. Furthermore, since the bodhisattvas Nikkō 日光 and Gakkō 月光 images (that are depicted in the *Kuin bukkakushō* diagram) are not noted in *Asabashō* and a pair was dedicated to the Konpon chūdō by Fujiwara Yorimichi 藤原頼道 in Eishō 7(1052), this further indicates that the diagram in *Asabashō* depicted the arrangement of the Konpon chūdō icons prior to 1052.[89] Thus, we can conclude that at least between the years 1028-1038, Saichō's Yakushi was already hidden away inside closed curtains.

Because Saichō's Yakushi was a secret image, there is ambiguity concerning the mudrās displayed by the image. According to *Asabashō*, the image displayed the *semui'in* with

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[87] *Asabashō, TZ* 8 [fascicle 46], p. 308b.

[88] Keimyō was the 27th Enryakuji abbot who received the Tendai *zasu* title in Manju 5 (1028-6).

[89] Fujiwara Yorimichi 藤原頼通 (992-1074), the eldest son of Fujiwara Michinaga by his chief wife Rinshi 倫子, donated the Nikkō and Gakkō images to the Central Hall on the twenty-third day of the twelfth month of Eishō 7. See *Sanmon dōshaki*, *GR* 24, p. 469.

the right hand and *yogan'in* with the left hand, and did not hold a medicine jar; this is characteristic of Yakushi images found in the early stage of Buddhist images in East Asia.[90] The author of *Keiran shūyōshū* wrote that it was actually the two other Yakushi images (which I will discuss later) placed outside the curtained inner sanctuary that had *semui yogan'in* mudrās; people mistook them for Saichō's Yakushi, which could not be viewed.[91]

In fact, *Keiran shūyōshū* describes the mudrās displayed by Saichō's Yakushi as being the *chikichijō'in* 智吉祥印, where the left hand, with palms up (its center depressed), was placed in front of the chest while the thumb and middle (or ring) finger of the right hand were joined together.[92] There were several variations of the mudrā. As a general rule, the right hand was raised, with the thumb and ring finger joined together to form a circle, similar to Amida Buddha's *seppō'in* 説法印, which is why the *Keiran shūyōshu* passage goes on to explain that it was similar to the *hōjin seppō'in* 法身説法印. The left hand meanwhile, held the hems of the Buddha's robe, or in other instances, was placed in front of the navel, with palms up.[93]

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[90] *Asabashō, TZ* 8 [fascicle 46], p. 305a.

[91] Mōri, "Enryakuji konpon chūdō," p. 93; *Keiran shūyōshū, T* 76, p. 852b.

[92] Mōri, "Enryakuji Konpon chūdō," p. 93. According to the *Butsuzō insō daijiten*, the general rule for this hand gesture is that the right hand is held out, the tips of the right thumb and ring finger should touch while the remaining fingers are extended. The left hand either takes the hem tips of the Buddha's drapery or is held palms up, near the navel. See: Akiyama Shōkai, *Butsuzō inzō*, 241-243.

[93] Ibid., pp. 241-242. As explained in Chapter One, this mudrā combination can be found on Yakushi paintings in Dunhuang. See Luo Huaqing ed., Zun xiang hua juan, in *Dunhuang shi ku kuan ji*, vol. 2 (Hongkong: Shang wu yin shu guan, 2002), plate 51 for the Sui period seated Yakushi in Cave 305; plate 57 for Cave 220, Mid Tang standing Yakushi.

Yakushi images with the *chikichijo'in* mudrā are quite rare. Among extant examples, there is a seated Kamakura era Yakushi from Shōjiji 勝持寺 (Kyoto, and not to be mistaken for the smaller, ninth century seated Yakushi, also owned by the temple) with mudrās that appear to fit the description of *chikichijo'in*.[94] Mōri suggests that the Murōji 室生寺 Kondō Yakushi (standing to the left of the main Yakushi image) also displays a kind of *chikichijō'in* since the right thumb is joined by the middle finger.[95] It should be noted however, that both hands are restorations, and *Kakuzenshō* refers to these hand gestures as *semui yogan'in*.[96] The ninth century Eikonji 榮根寺 Yakushi from Hyōgo prefecture seems to have another variation of the *chikichijō'in/hōjin seppō'in*. The right hand is raised to shoulder level and the thumb and middle finger join to form a circle. The left hand is raised to the chest; it holds a *cintamani* jewel in its palm, though this is probably a later addition.

In a recent study, Tsuda also maintained that the mudrās held by Saichō's Yakushi was in fact a rare variant of the *semui yogan'in*.[97] Tsuda based his conclusion on an

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[94]For the Shōjiji seated image, see Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei*, vol. 3 pl. 261. For a photographic reproduction of the Eikonji seated Yakushi, see vol. 7, pl. 338. Not much is known about the Eikonji image and the ninth century dating is based on stylistic analysis by Ishikawa Tomohiko 石川智彦, who wrote the entry on the Eikonji image in *Butsuzō shūsei*, p. 216.

[95] Mōri, "Tendai chōkoku," pp. 211-212.

[96] Sherry D. Fowler, "Murōji: A Contextual Analysis of the Temple and its Images," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California Los Angeles, 1994) p. 174. *Kakuzenshō* [fascicle 3], *TZ* 5, fig. 6, p. 30.

[97] Nagaoka Ryūsaku citing Tsuda Tetsuei 津田徹英, "Murōji kondō shobutsu shaken," (Paper presented at the Chōkokushi kenkyūkai kenkyū happyō, Tokyo: Tokyo National Museum, June 5, 1999) quoted in Nagaoka Ryūsaku,"Jōgyōsō so kōkan shita sanji no reizō," in *Kokuhō to rekishi no tabi* 3 (1999): 19.

examination of *Shijō hiketsu* 四帖秘決,[98] which notes Jien's testimony that Saichō's Yakushi had the right thumb and middle finger joined while the other fingers were straight; the left arm was kept very close to the body, with the left palm facing upward and fingers outstretched and the five fingers all slightly bent. The fact that he noted this indicates that he must have found this to be a rare hand gesture for Yakushi.[99]

A diagram of this variant *semui yogan'in* mudrā can be found in *Kakuzenshō*, titled "*Yakushihō*" 薬師法.[100] The *Kakuzenshō* diagram calls this mudrā "*semui yogan'in*," but it in fact matches Jien's description of the mudrā in variant form. Nagaoka stated that the standing Yakushi from Hōkaiji and Jingoji display hand gestures similar to this.[101] The slight variation becomes apparent when compared to the *semui yogan'in* of the Murōji Kondō main Yakushi. The left hand of the two former Yakushi are held out at a much acuter angle, rather than being lowered like the Murōji Yakushi. In any case, it may be safe to say that this particular mudrā was a variant of the *semui yogan'in*.

Whether Saichō's Yakushi had the *chikichijō'in* or *semui yogan'in*, will never be known for certain since as a *hibutsu* it was never clearly described in the sources. And as the *Keiran shūyōshū* passage reminds us, by the medieval period there was already a debate as to the appearance of the image.

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[98] *Shijō hiketsu* is said to be a collection of oral transmission from Jien(1155-1225).
[99] Tsuda Tetsuei, "Iwate Daikōji no Yakushi nyorai ryūzō," *BG* 262 (2002): 116.

[100] *Kakuzenshō* [fascicle 3] *TZ* 5, p. 50, fig. 6

[101] Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," p. 19.

B. The Other Yakushi Statues

Though Saichō's Yakushi was a concealed icon, this did not prevent it from becoming a prototype for other replications. In fact, what is remarkable about the Konpon chūdō is that nine other standing Yakushi images, all adopting iconographical traits similar to Saichō's Yakushi, were made in the ninth century and enshrined there. The earliest of those was a set of Shichibutsu Yakushi, consisting of seven standing Yakushi images *nishaku* 二尺 tall (60.6 cm).[102] Since I will be discussing the Shichibutsu Yakushi set in Chapter Five in detail, it will not be taken up here. As mentioned earlier, there were two other standing Yakushi images placed in the inner sanctuary, though outside the curtains that hid the Shichibutsu Yakushi and Saichō's Yakushi. I contend that these two Yakushi were made in the likeness of Saichō's Yakushi, and served as the *maedachi* 前立, literally the image that "stands in front" of the *hibutsu* 秘仏. *Maedachi* were usually placed in front of the closed shrine where the *hibutsu* was enshrined, so that worshippers might view an alternate manifestation of the secret image.[103]

<u>Yakushi image commissioned by Anne 安恵 (795- 868), fourth Tendai abbot in 864</u>

One of these images, placed just outside the curtains concealing Saichō's Yakushi was a mid ninth century Yakushi. According to *Eigaku yōki*, this image was vowed (*hongan* 本願) by Enryakuji's secular administrator (*zoku bettō* 俗別当) Ōtomo Sukune Kunimichi 大伴宿禰国道 (768-828). Anne, the fourth Enryakuji abbot (abbotship in 864) was said to have

[102] *Sanmon dōshaki, GR* 24, p. 469a.

[103] Fowler, "Hibutsu," p. 138.

carved the image out of numinous wood in about two lunar months.[104] Kunimichi's name appears briefly in the *Nihon kōki* (in 813 and 815). He held senior third rank at court, as well as holding a joint position as Minister of Justice (行部省) and Governor of Musashi province, and became the secular temple administrator to Enryakuji (*zoku bettō*) in Kōnin 14 (824-3).

Anne, a disciple of Ennin, was appointed by the court as *naigubu zenji* 内供奉禅師 in Jōgan 4 (862).[105] He was very successful at his job and in 864 he was elected abbot (*zasu* 座主) of Enryakuji. Mōri postulates that the Yakushi was probably made between Jōgan 1 - Jōgan 10 (859-868) during Anne's abbotship.[106] This Yakushi was clearly made using Saichō's Yakushi as a model, since it was made in the exact same height of 5 *shaku* 5 *sun* with a gold body and polychrome applied on its robe.

Standing Yakushi image commissioned by Yuishu 惟首, sixth Tendai zasu

The tenth Yakushi enshrined in the Konpon chūdō was also a standing image. *Eigaku yōki* records that the sixth Tendai abbot, Yuishu (825-893, abbotship 892-893), was

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104 The lay temple administrator system was established in 823. They served as Enryakuji's representatives at court, and were appointed by the court. They were usually ranking courtiers who were in positions close to the emperor, see Mikael S. Adolphson, *The Gates of Power: Monks, Courtiers and Warriors in Premodern Japan* (Honolulu, University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 28-29. Ōtomo no Kunimichi was one of Saichō's firmest lay supporters. (Groner, *Saichō*, p. 270).
薬師仏像一軀。高５尺身金色。衣文彩色。本願主延暦寺別当正三位刑部卿兼武蔵守勲六等大伴宿祢国道。天台第四座主安恵和尚。有師檀契。*Eigaku yōki*, *GR* 24, p. 509b.

105 *Naigubu zenji* 内供奉禅師 were monks that served at court, for the *naidōjō* (court chapel).

106 Mōri, "Enryakuji konpon chūdō," p. 87.

said to have carved the Yakushi in Jōgan 1(859).[107] The image measured 5 *shaku*, 5 *sun* 五尺三寸 in height (roughly 161 centimeters), and following the tradition of Saichō's Yakushi, it also had its body covered in gold and polychromed robes.

With nine Yakushi standing images enshrined in the Konpon chūdō, it becomes quite apparent that the Enryakuji Tendai lineage, following Saichō's tradition, placed greater religious significance on the standing Yakushi form over the seated type. As noted, the two Yakushi commissioned by Anne and Yuishu were made in the likeness of Saichō's image, being standing images 5 *shaku* tall with gold and polychrome covering both body and robe. If we count all the Heian Yakushi images with National Treasure and Important Cultural Property status, the number of seated Yakushi far exceeds the number of standing (there are 140 seated compared to 24 standing). In the eighth century, Yakushi housed in the main halls of royal temples (Yakushiji, for example) were usually seated Buddha images. Seated images signify the Buddha in "preaching mode," giving sermons to devotees in his Pure Land.[108] The standing Yakushi image on the other hand, was modeled after the idea of the Buddha "performing ascetic practices" *gyōdō* 行道, as well as itinerant preaching *yugyō* 遊行.[109] In this case, the idea of a "standing Yakushi" either performing ascetic practices or walking

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[107] Sources such as *Eigaku yōki* note that Yuishu made the image with his own hands (本願主第六座主惟首和尚手自所造立也), which is probably an attempt to exalt Yuishu's accomplishments, in the same manner that Saichō was said to have carved the first Konpon chūdō Yakushi himself. *Eigaku yōki, GR* 24, p. 509b.

[108] Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," pp. 6-7; see also Mochizuki Shinjō 望月信成, Sawa Ryūken 佐和隆研, and Umehara Takeshi 梅原猛, *Butsuzō: kokoro to katachi* (Tokyo: Nihon Hōsō Shuppan Kyōkai, 1986), 59.

[109] Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," p. 7.

and wandering through the countryside preaching, denotes a Buddha actively engaged with his followers. Therefore, we must take into account that there was a very conscious decision made by Enryakuji priests to house standing Yakushi images in the Konpon chūdō.

This brings us to question the main function of this particular sacred space. In other words, the hall was not meant to represent the "Buddha's Pure Land in this world," where participants meditated upon the Buddha and envisioned themselves reborn in Buddha's Pure Land, listening to his sermons; rather, it was a place where Tendai priests actively engaged in ritual activities, where the images were periodically activated and were expected to continuously interact with devotees.

Over all, there seems to have been a difference between temples established by royal order and temples built privately under the supervision of religious professionals. For example, the *kokubunji* 国分寺 temples established by the government often housed seated Yakushi images. On the other hand, temples established privately, such as Jingoji, Hieizanji (Mt. Hiei), and Kankeiji housed standing Yakushi images.[110]

Certain conclusions can be drawn from the above findings. The earliest icons worshipped on Mt. Hiei were Yakushi images. The choice for enshrining Yakushi, illustrates a widespread popularity of the Yakushi cult in the late eighth century but also reflects Saichō's personal affinity with the deity. Ganjin's auspicious icons as well as Saichō's own

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[110] A chart drawn up by Nishio Masahito demonstrates that over eighty percent of the *honzon* installed in the 36 *kokubunji* 国分寺 (where the icons can be properly identified), are Yakushi images. Nishio explores the development of *kokubunji* from the time the edict was passed in order to find out when and why Yakushi came to be the preferred icon of choice for installation in *kokubunji*. See Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō*, pp. 49-74.

experiences in Tang Chinese religious practices became sources of inspiration for the standing Yakushi enshrined in the Konpon chūdō.

As I will discuss in the next section, the standing 5 *shaku* Yakushi became an iconic type representing the Tendai lineage. As Nagaoka has suggested, the idea of the standing Yakushi was as a deity in ascetic form, one which would have had particular religious significance to the practitioners of Enryakuji, who were expected to conduct strict training for twelve years without ever leaving the mountain.

Another salient point is that the Tendai sect actively adopted and employed the sandalwood tradition from the continent in their icon production. Though *danzō* are normally defined as images made in the plain-wood style, continental practices of polychroming and adorning sandalwood images was applied to the Konpon chūdō Yakushi images. Moreover, the trend of producing sandalwood statues, particularly those that were life-size was evidently adopted at Konpon chūdō during the ninth century. These images ranged from 2 to 5 *shaku*, and were not produced in the Official Buddhist workshops in the capital but were most likely commissioned by Saichō or his disciples and made by local studios or independent artisans familiar with sculpting wood.[111]

5. Extant Heian Standing Yakushi Images of the Konpon chūdō Lineage

In this section, I will examine extant ninth century Yakushi images that closely match the descriptions of the Konpon chūdō Yakushi and are probably of the same iconographical lineage; i.e., they were replicated from the Konpon chūdō Yakushi images (*mokoku* 模刻).

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[111] Kuno, "Enryakuji no butsuzō," pp. 138-139.

Nishikawa Kyōtarō for example, calls these Yakushi images "Tendai-style Yakushi" that share the following features: 1) often (but not exclusively) they are standing icons 2) often made in the *ichiboku* technique 3) made as sandalwood icons (*danzō*) in the plain-wood style or have traces of color pigment that were applied over white gesso 白土地彩色.[112]

Itō Shirō demonstrated in his study of a standing Fudō image from Myōhō'in 妙法院 (Kyoto) that is was of Tendai lineage and that the idea of copying an image in the likeness of a prototype during the Heian period did not necessarily mean that they were made as exact copies, for often the replicated images did not exactly match the original icon in height.[113] Nevertheless, I contend that we begin to see the early stages of icon replication in the Heian period with Saichō's Yakushi becoming an iconic type for subsequent standing Yakushi made and enshrined in Tendai-affliated temples. This is impossible to prove stylistically, as none of the original Konpon chūdō Yakushi images have survived to base our comparisons on. Nevertheless, I propose that standing Yakushi enshrined in many of the Heian temples were made in the "spiritual likeness" of the Saicho's Yakushi; by this I mean that they were endowed with one or more characteristics that would have been immediately recognized as

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[112] These elements, according to Nishikawa are all features that seem to be found in Yakushi images that are housed as *honzon* in Tendai temples (though there are seated examples as well at Tendai temples, such as the Yakushi from Risshakuji 立石寺 in Yamagata, and Shishikutsuji 獅子屈寺, Osaka). Nishikawa Kyōtarō 西川杏太郎, *Nihon chōkokushi ronsō* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 2000): 94-98. The article was first published as "Hōkaiji Yakushi nyoraizō kō," *Bijutsushi* 56 (1965).

[113] Itō Shirō 伊藤史朗, "Myōhōin Gomadō Fudō myōō ryūzō ni tsuite: Tendai kei Fudō no ikkeifu," *BG* 236 (1998): 28-30.

distinctly "of Enryakuji Konpon chūdō lineage," and therefore were considered to have great spiritual efficacy.

A. Tadadera 多田寺 Yakushi [114]

According to the temple's origin tale (*engi* 縁起), Tadadera was established by the royal order of Kōken 孝謙 tennō (r.749-758). The temple's image, long treated as a *hibutsu*, is a Yakushi enshrined as a triad with two bodhisattva attendants, but because each image is slightly different in style and measurement, it is thought that they were originally made separately and formed into a triad at a later period. Made of Japanese cypress (*hinoki*) in the plain-wood style, the Yakushi is 192.5 centimeters tall (with the lotus pedestal, it measures 218.2 centimeters) and is carved in the *ichiboku* method without hollowing out the inside to prevent the wood from cracking (*uchiguri* 内刳).[115] Though the lack of a central cavity and the deep carving of the drapery suggest an early Heian period image, as Donald McCallum has observed, if we look at the Yakushi's carving details, "the sculptor appears to have abstracted the scheme used in the ninth century and arranged the folds in a way that is almost pure pattern, with practically no relation to the natural fall of drapery." [116] Thus, it was probably made in the tenth century, rather than the ninth.

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[114] See Kurata Bunsaku 倉田文作, *Wakasa no koji bijutsu* (Fukui-ken, Ōi-gun, Takahamachō: Wakasa no Koji Bijutsu Kankōkai, 1986), 154, 177; Kurata Bunsaku, *Jōgan chōkoku, NB* 44 (1970): 36-37; McCallum, "Evolution of the Buddha," pp. 159-161; Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei,* vol. 2, pp. 104-105.

[115] Itō Shirō believes it is made from *kaya* wood. Itō, "*Yakushi nyoraizō,*" p. 55.

[116] McCallum, "Evolution of the Budda," p. 162.

This image is a standing figure with both legs straight, with its head facing forward. As for the arms and hands, the right arm is raised at the elbow with palm forward; the middle and ring finger are bent down, while the left hand is slightly bent down with the palm facing out toward the viewer; again the fingers are extended with the exception of the middle and ring fingers that are bent upward (the left hand is a later restoration) and it does not hold a medicine jar.

What is most striking about this image is the head and face, with a disproportionately large head compared to its body, and a prominent cranial protuberance with separately attached snail shell curls. There is a very large *byakugō* 百毫 (Skt. *urna*) between the eyebrows which make a broad sweeping arch across the forehead, while the eyes are set wide apart from each other and the bridge of the nose is thin and very long.[117] The cheeks are very full and rounded and the thin lips curl up in a subtle smile. All together this creates a gentle, yet commanding countenance.

The basic arrangement of the drapery consists of the surplice (*nōe* 衲依), comprising the main piece of garment covering the body and left arm, the *henzan* 偏衫, an undergarment worn under the surplice. Typical of early Heian images, the image lacks an *uchiguri* and the carving of the folds is strongly articulated, with multiple folds on the lower belly forming a V-shape over the pelvic area and then change to a U-shape down between the legs, similar to the Jingoji Yakushi. With the exception of the abstract "comma-shaped" folds, the thigh area is smooth and unarticulated.

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[117] *Byakugō*, often erroneously mistaken for the third eye, is actually a tuft of white hair that emits a bright light, and one of the thirty-two auspicious markings of the Buddha.

B. Jūmanji 充満寺 Yakushi

Jūmanji is located in Shiga prefecture and its standing Yakushi image was probably made in the late tenth or early eleventh century. The statue is 161.5 centimeters tall and made in the single-block construction from *keyaki* 欅 (zelkova wood).[118] There is no central cavity and the hands and feet are attached to the main body. A coat of lacquer has been applied on the surface and there are traces of polychrome left on the drapery. The Yakushi has a very tall *nikkei*, and the drapery forms the typical Y-shape fold over the lower abdomen and ovoid-shapes around the two thighs. The hem of the monk's robe that drapes over the feet forms strong curves. Presently, the hand gestures that the Yakushi makes are the *raigō'in* 来迎印, which are typically held by Amida Buddha. However, since the image has always been referred to as Yakushi and since the hands are later restorations, scholars generally believe that it was once a Yakushi.

According to a temple legend, Saichō built a Tendai sect temple in this area called *Senmyōji* 泉明寺 and carved statues of Yakushi, an Eleven-headed Kannon and Twelve Divine Generals which he housed in a worship hall. In 1518, this building was torched but the local people were able to rescue the Yakushi and Kannon images which they then housed in another hall. This hall also burned down in 1617 and after this fire they built a small worship hall and enshrined the two images there. This hall still stands today and is called the Yakushidō. [119]

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[118] Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei,* vol. 4, pl. 365.

[119] Ueno Shigeki 上野茂樹, *Ōmiji no chōzō* (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1974), 124.

While the story of Saichō carving the images of Yakushi, the Jūichimen Kannon and the Twelve Divine Generals are clearly legendary, intended to increase the sanctity of Senmyōji, what is salient here is that the 5 *shaku* tall standing Yakushi, with polychrome applied on its robes was clearly made as a replication of Saichō's Konpon chūdō Yakushi.

C. Kōonji 孝恩寺 Yakushi

Kōonji is located in Osaka. The Yakushi image is 158.4 centimeters tall and is made from *kaya* in the single-block technique and does not have any *uchiguri*.[120] The facial features are shallowly carved, with eyes set rather apart from the brows, a nose with a small bridge and wide nostrils, and thin lips, giving a crude, rustic look. Like the Tadadera Yakushi, the lack of a central cavity suggests an early Heian image but the shallow carving details probably indicate a tenth century production. As for the mudrās, the right hand forms the *semui'in* while the left arm is bent to almost a 90 degrees angle. Though a medicine jar rests on the left palm, this is a later period addition. Furthermore, the left index and middle fingers, as well as the right index, middle and ring finger were also restored. The most striking characteristic of this image is the head, with an excessively tall *nikkei*, suggesting that it may have been modeled after the Jingoji Yakushi, rather than Saichō's Yakushi.

Another similarity between this image and the Jingoji Yakushi is the representation of *ōhi* 横被, a separate piece of garment which hangs down the right arm. Compared to the Jingoji image however, the carving on the Kōonji Yakushi's drapery is unrefined and rather

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[120] Inoue Tadashi says it is 157.2 centimeters tall. Inoue Tadashi 井上正, "Osaka Kōonji Yakushi nyorai ryūzō," *Nihon bijutsu kōgei* 7, no. 538 (1983): 71. See also Itō, *Yakushi nyoraizō,* pl. 72.

simplified. It has Y-shaped folds over the pelvic area and the thigh areas have two rounded ovoid-folds over the thighs. Furthermore, the entire surface of the image has been first painted with white pigment, and then with a yellowish pigment 白土地彩色, suggesting that it was made as a sandalwood image.[121]

D. Dairenji 大蓮寺 Yakushi

Dairenji 大蓮寺 in Sakyōku, Kyoto, houses a group of Buddhist images in the Main Hall which used to belong to Gion 祇園 (the present Yasaka Shrine).[122] The history of this temple is somewhat complex. Kankeiji 観慶寺 was built on the site of Gion temple complex by Ennyo 円如 who scholars believe founded the complex in the mid-ninth century.[123] It was Ennyo who also enshrined a Yakushi statue as the principal icon of Kankeiji.

In Enkyū 2 (1070) a fire destroyed many of the buildings at Gion, including Kankeiji. In the following year, many of these burnt-down buildings were rebuilt. Itō Shirō believes that the present day Yakushi was a replacement icon made a year after the 1070 fire. Furthermore, his study shows that stylistically, it was made either by a Heian period sculptor known as Kakujo 覚助 or by a sculptor of this lineage.[124]

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121 Inoue, "Osaka Kōonji Yakushi," p. 71.

122 See Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei*, vol. 3, pl. 123.

123 See Neil McMullin, "The Enryakuji and the Gion Shrine-Temple Complex in the Mid-Heian Period," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 14, nos. 2-3 (1987): 165.

124 Kakujo (d. 1077) was Buddhist sculptor from the eleventh century. He became the master sculptor Jōchō's 定朝 (d. 1057) successor. Itō, *Heian jidai chōkokushi*, pp. 130-131.

The image is a slightly larger than life-size, standing 192.4 centimeters tall (6 *shaku* 3 *sun* 4 *bun*), made out of *hinoki* using the split-and-join method (*warihagi* 割矧) with *uchiguri*, and wears an outer robe covering the left shoulder while the right shoulder is covered by the *henzan.*[125] Itō purports that this image was a replication of Saichō's Yakushi based on the similar the treatment of the Dairenji Yakushi's drapery, which has traces of white pigment applied on the wood, over which a lacquer-coating was applied. Furthermore, in keeping with the Konpon chūdō Yakushi tradition, the back of the garment has a hint of red pigment and greenish-white color on the underside of the left sleeve, which suggests that the image wore a red surplice with a white underside, and lacquer coating on the skin.[126]

Further associations between the image and Saichō's Yakushi can be found in the fact that the image was a *honji butsu* 本地仏 of Gion, an affiliated cloister (*betsu'in* 別院) of Enryakuji.[127] Moreover, a temple asset record, *Kankeiji kanjinchō* 観慶寺勧進帳 owned by Dairenji notes, "It is said that this temple's principal deity was from the sacred wood (*misogi* 御衣木) of the Konpon chūdō spiritual image (当時本尊者根本中堂霊像一体之御衣木也云),

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[125] The jewels used for the *nikkeishu* (jewel on the cranial protuberance) and *byakugō* were added later to the image. *Warihagi* refers to a technique in making wooden sculpture where a rough form of the image is carved out of a piece of wood, and then it is split from front to back or from left to right (or both); then the head is separated from the body. *Uchiguri* is applied and then the split pieces are joined together. *A Dictionary of Japanese Art Terms* (Tokyo: Tokyo Bijutsu, 1990), 671. Itō, *Heian jidai chōkukushi,* p. 128.

[126] Itō, *Heian jidai chōkokushi,* p. 129.

[127] Honji 本地 means "basis" and refers to the Buddhist *honji suijaku* theory that *kami* 神 are the "traces" or "manifestations" (*suijaku* 垂迹) in this earthly realm of the original form of the Buddhas (*honji*). This Japanese interpretation is one of many different versions of *honji suijaku*, an idea that originated in China to explain the various appearances of the Buddha (*keshin* 化身).

suggesting that the Dairenji image has long been associated with Saichō's Yakushi.[128] However, Itō notes that there were some differences between the Dairenji's Yakushi and Konpon chūdō's, mainly their sizes and the fact that Saichō's Yakushi did not hold any attributes while the Kankeiji image held a medicine jar in his left hand. Though the medicine jar is a later addition, Itō states that the left hand and palm is shaped in such a way that it was meant to hold a jar from the beginning. However, as previously noted in Chapter One, medicine jars came to be a standard attribute for Yakushi images after the ninth century and the Kankeiji image, made in the eleventh century, was no exception even among Yakushi images that were clearly replications of the Konpon chūdō images.

In regard to its height, the Kankeiji image is considered to be of *Shū hanjōroku* 周半丈六 size.[129] Another example of a *Shū hanjōroku* Yakushi image made in the eleventh century was a standing Yakushi image commissioned by Myōkai for Enryakuji's Jisō'in 実相院. *Fusō ryakki* mentions that this temple was established in Kōhei 6(1063) and that the principal icon was a *hanjōroku* golden Yakushi Buddha.[130]

Itō also states that since there are other examples of *Shū hanjōroku* Yakushi from the Fujiwara period, there may have been some trend at that time in fashioning Yakushi in this particular size. Other extant *Shū hanjōroku* 周半丈六 Yakushi images that are grouped

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[128] Itō, *Heian jidai chōkokushi,* p. 133.

[129] Half of a *Shū jōroku* image. *Shū jōroku* 周丈六 is based on the "*shaku* 尺" used in the Zhou dynasty and corresponded to approximately 7 *sun*, 5 *bun*, so a *jōroku* image based on the Zhou *shaku* would be roughly 363.6 centimeters. Half of this would be 181.3 centimeters.

[130] *Fusō ryakki* [fascicle 29], *KT* 12, p. 300.

together in the same category are the Shōnenji 称念寺 (Shiga) and Tōkōin 東光院 (Fukuoka) images.[131] The Shōnenji image is 215.3 centimeters tall, and though currently it is a plain-wood image, there are thin traces of polychrome in a few areas suggesting that the icon was once painted. With the exception of the front sleeve portion and the tips of both feet, the image is made from a single block of *hinoki*. There is an inscription in the inner cavity which is written Enkyū 6 (1074) which demonstrates that the image is a late eleventh century piece.[132]

The Tōkōin image is now currently preserved at the Fukuoka City Art Museum. It stands 198 centimeters tall, and is made in the joint-wood technique out of *hinoki*. Like the Shōnenji Yakushi, this image is characterized by the typical *semui yogan'in* hand gestures, with the left hand holding a covered medicine jar. The facial expression is very gentle and serene, and though the drapery folds are made in the typical Y-shaped folds at the pelvic area, the carvings are very shallow and abbreviated, suggesting the image was a late Heian production. Though traces of polychrome are not mentioned, the image has a legendary account linking it to Enryakuji's Konpon chūdō Yakushi; *Chikuzenkuni zokufū doki* 筑前国続風土記 explains that the principal icon of Tōkōji was an image Saichō himself sculpted when he came back from his trip in China; this is obviously an embellishment to enhance the Yakushi's sanctity.[133]

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131 For photographic images of these two Buddhas, see Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei*, vol. 4, p. 350 for the Shōnenji image and vol. 8, p. 254 for the Tōkōin image.

132 Entry on the Shōnenji Yakushi by Takanashi Junji, *Butsuzō shūsei* vol. 4, p. 350.

133 Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei*, vol. 8, p. 254.

In my view, the *shū hanjōroku* emphasized the sanctity of the Yakushi by its association with the sandalwood tradition. For example, among the numerous texts that wrote about the merits of image-making, one text in particular, *Daijō zōzō kudoku kyō* (Skt: *Tathāgata Pratibimba Pratisthāmisama Sūtra*) notes that the first Buddha image made was seven "feet" in height and made out of sandalwood.[134]

E. Komatsuji 小松寺 Yakushi

The Komatsuji standing Yakushi, the temple's *hibutsu* 秘仏, was only recently examined and photographed by Konno Toshifumi, since it was stored away in a *zushi* 厨子 (shrine) on the main altar of the temple. Komatsuji is located in the densely forested area of Chikuramachi 千倉町, Chiba prefecture. Their temple legend says that the acclaimed Nara period mountain ascetic, En no gyōja 役行者 established the temple in Yōrō 2 (718) and that it was later revived by Ennin.[135]

The image stands 147.3 centimeters tall, which is roughly 5 *shaku*. As for its head, it is round and slightly tilted forward when viewed from the side, with a *nikkei* in the shape of a low mound, and small round snail-shaped curls that were attached separately, though most have been lost. The neck is broad and short, displaying two distinctly marked canonical folds instead of the usual three. From the front, the image appears to have very broad shoulders and large thighs giving an impression of a very corpulent body, but it is remarkably shallow

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[134] For reference on the *Daijō zōzō kudoku kyō,* see: Mochizuki Shinkō 望月信亨, *Mochizuki Bukkyō daijiten*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Sekai Seiten Kankō Kyōkai, 1954-1958), 3277b.

[135] For further information, see Konno Toshifumi 紺野敏文, "Komatsuji zō Yakushi nyorai ryūzō," *Kokka* 1265 (2001): 31-32.

in depth when viewed from the side. This is most likely based on the sculptor's skill or personal style, rather than on an iconographical canon. Like many Yakushi images of this lineage, the image is made from *kaya* in the *ichiboku* technique and it does not have a central cavity. As for the drapery, the folds form a typical Y-shape over the lower abdomen and ovoids around the lower leg area, shallow and rather simplified in articulation. The Yakushi wears an outer robe and a *henzan* that covers the right shoulder and the right chest area; this is similar to the Murōji Kondō Yakushi and the Tadadera Yakushi of Fukui prefecture. The *kun* 裙 (skirt-like garment) is long and its hem undulates in a wave-like pattern over the feet. Konno notes the rather severe expression of the Yakushi. It has an awe-inspiring impression which is accentuated by prominent nostrils, upper lips that protrude slightly forward and eyes where the corners point up sharply "like the beak of a bird."[136]

In Konno's opinion, several features of this Yakushi suggest that it was made in the style of the Enryakuji Konpon chūdō Yakushi images. The right hand forms the *semui'in* while the left arm is bent close to ninety degrees, palms facing up and holds a medicine jar. Konno notes that both wrists and hands were later replaced and that originally, the left hand did not hold a medicine jar, like the original Saichō's Yakushi. The features that link this image to the Enryakuji Konpon chūdō tradition are the red pigment that had been applied to a coating of white on the outer robe, which means that the outer robe was once polychromed in red, as well as the temple's Enryakuji-Ennin association.

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[136] Konno Toshifumi, "Komatsujizō Yakushi nyorai ryūzō," *Kokka* 1265 (2001): 31.

F. Murōji Kondō Yakushi

Both Mōri and Shimizu believe that the principal icon of Murōji Kondō (now known as the Kondō Shaka), was modeled after the Enryakuji Konpon chūdō Yakushi because the description of the robe that appears in written records matches the Murōji image.[137] First, the Murōji Yakushi makes the *semui'in* mudrā with the right hand and the *yogan'in* mudrā with the left and does not hold a medicine jar in its left hand. Secondly, a layer of brownish red pigment was found on the outside of the Murōji Yakushi's robes and traces of white-green pigment were found on the underside and the *henzan.*[138] The descriptions of the robe color closely match the two Konpon chūdō Yakushi figures commissioned by Anne and Yuishu. Shimizu also says that cut-gold (*kirikane*) was applied to the Murōji Shaka's robe, just like the *kirikane* applied later to Saichō's Yakushi.

Another poignant factor which suggests that the Murōji Shaka was modeled after the Konpon chūdō Yakushi is the strong presence of priests Shuen 修円 (769?- 835)and Enshū 円修(fl. Ca 830-863)in the Murō region during the first half of the ninth century, both of whom had direct associations with Saichō.[139] Shuen was a renowned monk who had received Hossō Buddhist training from the prominent Kōfukuji monk Kengyō 賢璟 (714-793), the founder of Murōji. Following the death of his master, Shuen 修円 is said to have put much

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[137] Shimizu, "Tendai no Yakushizō," p. 35; Mōri, *Nihon Bukkyō Chōkokushi,* p. 128 for the discussion of Tendai style Yakushi images. See also Fowler, *Murōji,* pp. 144-153, 176-176-180. for a detailed English discussion of this image and Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei,* vol. 6, pl. 190 for a photograph.

[138] Fowler, *Murōji,* p. 136.

[139] Shimizu, "Tendai no Yakushizō," p. 36.

effort in further developing the Murōji complex and in his late years resided in the Murō area and passed away at Murōji in 835.[140]

Shuen had ties to both Saichō and Enryakuji, going as far back as 794 when he participated in a dedication service (*kuyō e* 供養会) at the Konpon chūdō as a *dōtatsu* 堂達.[141] In 802, he attended a retreat to study Tendai works organized by Wake no Hiroyo 和気広世 and Matsuna 真綱 at Takaosanji 高雄山寺, which Saichō also attended.[142] He also studied newly copied Tendai works at Nodera Tendai'in 野寺天台院 in Kyoto. Moreover, Shuen received the *kanjō zanmai* 灌頂三昧 (Skt. *abhiṣeka samādhi*) precepts from Saichō at Takaosanji, and his name appears on Enryakuji's *Gakushō meichō* 学生名帳 (Register of Students) as the head master of the *shanagō* 遮那業 (a course of study on Esoteric Buddhism).[143] Shuen and Saichō's relationship later deteriorates but there is no question that at one point, Shuen had close ties with Saichō.

Enshū was one of Gishin's top disciples (the first abbot of Enryakuji and disciple of Saichō), who after Gishin's death became involved in an accession conflict and was eventually banished from Mt. Hiei and came to settle at Murōji. Sherry Fowler states that Enshū first came to Murō in Tenchō 9 (832). Then he went to China along with Ken'e 堅慧

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[140] Mōri, *Nihon bukkyō chōkokushi,* p. 124; Shimizu, *Heian chōkokushi,* p. 94.

[141] *Dōtatsu* is a priest who assists the main officiant (dōshi) during a Buddhist service.

[142] Wake no Hiroyo and Matsuna (783-846) were sons of Wake no Kiyomaro 和気清麻呂 (733-799), who was one of Kanmu tennō's trusted advisors and was instrumental in the decision to move the capital to Heian (Kyoto) The Wake clan was one of the most important political families serving the court of Kanmu in the late eighth century.

[143] Mōri, *Nihon bukkyō chōkokushi,* p. 125.

in Jōwa 10 (843) in search of Tendai teachings. He returned a year later and though there are no records to show whether or not Enshū continued to have contact with Murōji, Ken'e resided at a neighboring temple Butsuryūji. Fowler surmises that the return of prominent Tendai monks such as Ken'e and Enshū to the Murō region may have stimulated patronage of the Murōji Yakushi image after Jōwa 11 (844), and that the particular style was influenced by Enshū and Ken'e's knowledge of China.[144]

Like the Enryakuji Konpon chūdō Yakushi images, the Murōji Golden Hall Yakushi also appears to have been painted, since there are traces of polychrome that are observable on the image, though most of it has worn off over the years. Originally, the image was covered in white, over which vermillion was painted. Traces of yellow over white remain on some skin areas. There are some traces of red-brown (*bengara* 弁柄) pigment on the *nōe* 衲衣, blue-green on the *henzan* and black pigment on the hair which were restored at a later time.[145]

While the conscious choice of enshrining a standing Yakushi icon may have been inspired by Saichō and the Yakushi images at Enryakuji, Shimizu Zenzō also pointed out fundamental differences between the Enryakuji Konpon chūdō Yakushi images and the Murōji Kondō main Yakushi image. An unusual carving technique, known as *fuku rempashiki* 複連派式 is applied to the robes of the Murōji main image. This "rippling-wave style" as Sherry Fowler has rendered it in English, had a characteristic pattern of carving the drapery folds by repeating the grouping of one large wave-like fold followed by two smaller shallow

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[144] Fowler, *Murōji*, pp. 148-149.

[145] Washizuka Hiromitsu, *Murōji*, *Nihon no kōji bijutsu,* vol. 13 (Osaka: Hoikusha, 1991), 63; Fowler, *Murōji*, p. 175.

folds.[146] Shimizu believes this carving technique was employed by a studio almost exclusively for Murōji and temples associated with Murōji.[147]

Shimizu suggested that another Yakushi image in the Golden Hall (dated to the mid tenth century) which stands to the left of the main image bore a closer resemblance to the Konpon chūdō Yakushi, particularly since its drapery did not employ the *rempashiki* technique.[148] This image is 164 centimeters tall, exactly the same height as the 5 *shaku* 3 *sun* Konpon chūdō image that was commissioned by Yuishu, the sixth Enryakuji abbot. Moreover, the thick sideburns, low hairline, U-shaped folds over the knees were characteristic of Konpon chūdō Yakushi. Furthermore, Shimizu points to the restored hands of the Yakushi and explains that the awkward position of the left arm and hand was probably made to later accommodate a medicine jar on the palm. If one traced the natural line of the left sleeve, the original lower arm and hand would have drooped down very slightly with palm facing out, suggesting that originally, the hands had the *semui yogan'in* mudrā without the medicine jar, like the Enryakuji Konpon chūdō Yakushi.[149]

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[146] On *rempashiki*, see Kanamori Jun 金森遵, "Murōji kondō gozō kō," *Kokka* 584 (1939): 203-209.

[147] Shimizu, *Heian chokokushi*, p. 94.

[148] Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei,* vol. 6, pl. 182.

[149] Shimizu, *Heian chokokushi*,p. 95.

G. Hōkaiji 法界寺 Yakushi

Presently, the image is placed inside the central shrine in the Yakushi hall.[150] Nikkō and Gakkō bodhisattva images believed to be from the Kamakura period flank the shrine and the Twelve Divine Generals are positioned in front. The original Yakushi hall probably burned down during the Ōnin years (1467-69) or during the Tenshō years (1577-1592). After this, the Yakushi triad and the Twelve Generals were transferred to the Amida Hall and housed in front of the main Amida image.[151]

Hōkaiji was pledged by Hino Sukenari 日野資業 in Eishō 3 (1051) as a clan temple, and he commissioned this image in order to deposit a small Yakushi (supposedly carved by Saichō himself) that had been in his family for generations. According to the inscription on the back of the current halo from 1889 (the new halo was made then), the image became a *hibutsu* in the eighth month of Eishō 1 (1504) when devout worshippers had a box made for it. When the box was opened in 1888, they discovered the Yakushi with considerable damages and in 1889 it was repaired.[152]

The image is 88.5 centimeters tall (*nishaku*, *kyū sun*, *nibun* 二尺九寸二分), made in the joint-wood technique using cherry wood. Dark blue-green pigment was applied to the hair and red pigment on the lips while the rest of the image was left plain in the sandalwood style with *kirikane* decorating the monk's surplice, which covers both shoulders and the collar

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[150] Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei*, vol. 3, pl. 245.

[151] For more information on this image, see Nishikawa Kyōtarō 西川杏太郎, *Nihon chōkokushi ronsō* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 2000), 56.

[152] Nishikawa, *Nihon chōkokushi*, p. 87.

forms a V-shape. The hair is made up of 26 rows of small snail-shell curves carved directly on the head. The fleshiness around the thighs is not strongly articulated, and the Y-shape drapery folds around the pelvis area form shallow, gentle curves. On the whole, the image is made in a mild, gentle manner which Nishikawa assesses as stylistically appropriate to the Eishō years (1046-53). While the use of blue pigment, *kirikane* patterns, the Y-shaped drapery folds and mudrā clearly suggests a strong association to standing Yakushi in the Enryakuji Konpon chūdō tradition, this Yakushi also exhibits features that are unique, such as the prominent, fleshy nose, thick, fleshy ears (the bottoms curve slightly outwards) and the short robe which exposes the Yakushi's ankles.

As mentioned earlier, Nagaoka believes the Hōkaiji Yakushi's hand gestures must have been very similar to that of the Konpon chūdō Yakushi images because the Hōkaiji image was closely associated with Mt. Hiei.[153] The right arm is raised upward with the palm out, bearing the *semui* mudrā. The left hand, with the palm placed upward holds a medicine jar and bends out at a ninety degrees angle. The left foot is placed slightly outward as if it is stepping forward. Nagaoka asserts that this mudrā is not a typical *semui yogan'in*, but an atypical variation which matches the mudrā of Saichō's Yakushi described in the *Shijō hiketsu*.

H. Daikōji 大光寺 Yakushi

In 2002, Tsuda Tetsuei published a report in the journal *Bukkyō geijutsu* of his examination of a standing Yakushi image in Daikōji (Iwate prefecture), which he argues

[153] Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," p. 19.

belongs to the Enryakuji Konpon chūdō lineage.[154] The image fits the auspicious 5 *shaku* measurement by being 160.1 centimeters tall (5 *shaku* 2 *sun* 8 *bun* to be exact) and is dated to the twelfth century based on the way it has been constructed.[155] It is a typical standing Yakushi image that has *semui yogan* hand gestures.

One remarkable feature of this image is the traces of rough chisel marks that have been left on parts of the image, particularly around the U-shaped collar and *nikkei*, in the *natabori* 鉈彫 style, a carving technique where numerous rough marks of a round chisel is left on the surface of the statue.[156] At a glance, this may suggest that the image was an unfinished piece but these kinds of chisel-markings have been found on images of the highest quality, such as the Jingoji Yakushi, and suggests that they were executed deliberately. Tsuda is of the opinion that these chisel markings enhanced the spiritual character of the wood and was one method of expressing the notion of Saicho's Yakushi, which as we have seen earlier, was made from a miraculous piece of wood and said to have been carved by Saicho with his own hands.[157]

Another important feature suggesting that the image is of Tendai lineage are the traces of polychrome and decorations that were found on the robe. There has been a

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[154] Tsuda Tetsuei, "Iwate Daikōji no Yakushi ryūzō," *BG* 262 (2002): 116-119.

[155] Ibid., p. 119.

[156] Most *natabori* images are dated to the tenth to thirteenth century and are found in Central and Eastern Japan. For more information on *natabori* statues, see Kuno Takeshi, *Natabori* (Tokyo: Rokkō Shuppan, 1976), and "Natabori butsuzō ron: natabori no hassei ni kansuru shiron," *BG* 85 (1972): 32-44; Nakano Tadaaki, "Natabori butsu tsuikō,"*Shiseki to bijutsu* 480 (1977): 362-368.

[157] Tsuda, "Daikōji no Yakushi," p. 118.

considerable degree of discoloration, but Tsuda's examination of the image has revealed that the outer robe was painted with red or vermillion with an organic dye and the circular flower (*danka mon* 団花文) ornamentation and arabesque patterns (*karakusa mon* 唐草文) with ink or mineral pigment. Moreover, the abdomen portion of the drapery was painted in dark blue horizontal lines, which suggests the underside of the outer robe.[158] These traits clearly reveal that the image followed the manner of adornment found on the Konpon chūdō Yakushi images and in the *Keiran shūyōshū* passage.[159]

I. Other Enryakuji Konpon chūdō Related Yakushi

Hōkōji 宝光寺 Yakushi

This Yakushi from Shiga prefecture is a classic example of a 5 *shaku* 5 *sun* standing Yakushi measuring 166.7 centimeters tall.[160] It is made in the *ichiboku* technique from *kaya* wood and has some pigment applied, though the details of the polychrome are not clear from existing secondary sources. It is a secret image and is therefore not open for public viewing. The image (dated to the latter half of the tenth century) has no central cavity, and the drapery pattern follows the typical Y-shaped format around the pelvic area but the carving is very shallow and the drapery details seem to have been simplified.

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[158] Ibid., p. 119.

[159] *Keiran shūyōshū*, *T* 76, 851b.

[160] Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei*, vol. 4, pl. 136.

Kan'eiji 観永寺 Yakushi

This image, from a temple in Tokyo, measures 142.4 centimeters, so it is not the typical 5 *shaku* Yakushi.[161] At present, it is enshrined as a triad but the flanking bodhisattvas were brought over from Risshakuji 立石寺 in Dewa and the Yakushi itself was brought from Sekishinji 石津寺, a Tendai temple in Ōmi province. Sekishinji's temple origin tale (*engi*) says that both the temple and the Yakushi were commissioned by Saichō. Though the image is made from *kaya* in the *ichiboku* technique with no central cavity to emphasize the icon as a *danzō*, it was probably made in the late tenth century based on the simplified manner of the drapery, with shallow carvings.

6. Summary

In this chapter, I contended that the wooden standing Yakushi that Saichō enshrined in the Konpon chūdō became the prototype for one type of standing Yakushi images in Japan, and that this iconic type was disseminated all over the country during the Heian period. This icon-type in turn, was most likely inspired by the Tōshōdaiji standing Golden Hall Yakushi and the tradition of worshipping auspicious icons (*zuizō*).

Some of the main characteristics of the Konpon chūdō Yakushi icon-type include being a standing image, made out of wood in the single-block technique, and typically employing *kaya* or *hinoki*, the two most frequently used wood types replicating sandalwood icons in Japan. The application of polychrome and *kirikane* was another characteristic, though as we have seen, Saichō's Yakushi was made out of plain-wood and the

161 Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei*, vol. 1 pl. 113.

ornamentation was applied after his death by his disciples. Another important feature is the mudrā. Saichō's Yakushi was thought to have had a variant combination of the *semui yogan'in* without any attributes, while the other Konpon chūdō Yakushi icons had the more typical *semui yogan'in*; at some point they may have held a medicine jar, the ultimate iconographical attribute symbolizing Yakushi in Japan. Finally, the height of 5 *shaku*, following the Udayana icon tradition, bore a special religious significance.

I also explored several Heian Yakushi images of the Konpon chūdō Yakushi lineage. The criteria used to argue that these extant images were of the same iconographic lineage as the Konpon chūdō Yakushi were that they were enshrined in Tendai temples (or former Tendai) with legends and origin tales claiming that the icon was made by Saichō. While these extant Yakushi were made in the "likeness" of the Konpon chūdō images, they also had significantly different characteristics from one another. The images took on very individualistic colors because it was a bi-product of its specific locale, and involved the selection process on the part of the temple and patron. The salient point here is that the standing Yakushi images were not made as *exact* copies, in the kind of systematic and large-scale replication we see with the Zenkōji Amida triad in the Kamakura period.

The Zenkōji Amida icon replication was characterized by copies that are directly based on "a specific, precisely defined prototype" with hardly any stylistic or iconographical variation.[162] Furthermore, the cult appeared to have originated at the popular level and did not have a charismatic founder as the basis of its spiritual appeal. In contrast, the Konpon chūdō Yakushi became the prototype for standing Yakushi images made throughout the

[162] McCallum, *Zenkōji*, p.6

Heian period. The icon's spiritual efficacy was generated by association with Saichō, the charismatic founder of Enryakuji and the Tendai sect. The popularity of the cult and the widespread worship of Yakushi developed together with the flourishing of Tendai temples throughout Japan during the Heian period, when this organization amassed and exerted great power.

Thus, the creation of a Yakushi as an Enryakuji Konpon chūdō icon type involved a process where one or two highly recognizable iconographical particularities found in the original icon were selected and highlighted. As the extant images have demonstrated, the degree of variation in style and iconography was not in the least subtle, but as Fabio Rambelli states: "They were nevertheless considered to be "filiations," "separate bodies" – separate manifestations of the original "living Buddha" and as such, their status as copies is not that of a replica of the original but a "sample" of it."[163]

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When one searches for the word "Enryakuji" on the internet today, a large number of websites can be found displaying photographs and descriptions of the temple site. Surprisingly, most of them describe the Konpon chūdō in the following manner: "Konpon chūdō, the main hall of Enryakuji, is a national treasure. The principal icon is a Yakushi that was made by Dengyō daishi [Saichō]." [164] But as we have seen, the original image has been

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[163] Fabio Rambelli, "Secret Buddhas" *MN* 57, no. 3, (2002): 292.

[164] See also: Kobayashi, Ryūshō 小林隆彰, "Hieizan Konpon chūdō no Yakushi nyorai," *Daihōrin* 51/12 (1984): 136.

lost since the fire of Eikyō 7 (1435). At first, the fact that most visitors to Enryakuji's Konpon chūdō believe that the *hibutsu* they are worshipping is an image made by Saichō himself (when it was clearly a modern replica) troubled me, concerned as I was about the issue of authenticity and originality. However, upon giving the matter more thought, I realized that "the copy is no less powerful than the original. At the same time, the presence of copies does not diminish the privileged status of the original."[165]

[165] Quote from Rambelli, "Secret Buddhas," p. 292. See also Michael T. Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 2.

CHAPTER THREE

Quelling Spirits and Offering Solace: The Jingoji Yakushi as a Case Study

1. Introduction

The Jingoji 神護寺 standing image of Yakushi is one of the most impressive specimens of plain-wood style sculpture from the early Heian period, appearing in every standard textbook on Japanese art.[1] Today this national treasure is enshrined in the Golden Hall (*kondō* 金堂) of Jingoji, a Shingon sect temple located in the mountainous region northwest of Kyoto, near Mount Takao 高雄山 and Mount Atago 愛宕山. The statue was first introduced in *Shinbi taikan* 眞美大觀, an art history journal in 1903. Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the image is its peculiar facial features; contrary to our usual expectations of a Buddha possessing a benevolent and compassionate expression, it is one that is determined and severe, almost to the point of disdain. [2]

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[1] For photographs of the image, see Maruo Shōzaburō 丸尾彰三郎 ed., *NCKSS,* vol. 2. See also Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," pp. 5-11.

[2] For prewar discussion on the Jingoji Yakushi, see Adachi Kō, "Jingoji Yakushizō no zōken nendai," *Kōkogaku zasshi* 29, no. 12 (1939): 719-725. See also Asai Kazuharu, "Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō (jō)," pp. 4-10; "Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte (chū), *Museum* 363 (1981): 13-21; "Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte III," *Museum* 377 (1982): 4-14; "Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte IV," *Museum* 388 (1983): 21-34. Nakano Genzō, "Hasseiki kōhan ni okeru mokuchō hashō no haikei," *BG* 54 (1964): 17-34; Nagasaka Ichirō 長坂一郎, "Shoki jingūji no seiritsu to sono honzon no imi - Jingoji Yakushi nyorai ritsuzō no zōzō riyū wo tegakari ni shite," *BK* 354 (1992): 59-76; Nagaoka Ryūsaku, "Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō no isō," *BK* 359 (1994): 1-27. For an English summary of the Jingoji Yakushi debate by Japanese scholars, see Morse, "Standing Image of Yakushi," pp. 36-45.

The mystery of the Yakushi's solemn frown is the point of departure in this chapter. I argue that the Jingoji image successfully displays the fierce aspect of Yakushi, not commonly known but clearly expounded in the scriptures, and I will explain the historical circumstances leading up to its creation. I also contend that stylistically, iconographically and ritually, the image is possibly of the same lineage as Saichō's Konpon chūdō Yakushi. Since the latter has not survived, proving this is quite difficult, and I must be content in suggesting that there is at the very least, an intimate association between the two Yakushi images. As important as the Jingoji Yakushi is in Japanese art history, its ritual and stylistic lineage has not yet been thoroughly dealt with, and this chapter is an attempt to do so. Furthermore, I would like to mention that I am heavily indebted to the scholarship of Nagaoka Ryūsaku, who in the late 1990s offered a radical new way of understanding the Jingoji Yakushi.[3] Thus, I also examine how Nagaoka's new interpretation of the Jingoji Yakushi relates to and can in fact deepen our understanding of Saichō's Konpon chūdō Yakushi as well.

2. Historiography

The historiography of Jingoji is important for fully understanding the significance of its principal icon, as well as in illustrating why Nagaoka Ryūsaku's scholarship is such a departure from the past and valuable to my present investigation. One of the earliest attempts in uncovering the Jingoji Yakushi's provenance was made by the scholar Adachi

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[3] Nagaoka, "Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō," pp. 1-27. See also by the same author, "Sanji no reizō," pp. 4-22.

Kō in 1939, which subsequently became the widely-accepted and uncontested theory on the Jingoji Yakushi.[4]

Adachi proposed that Wake no Kiyomaro 和気清麻呂(733-799), a high court official established the temple Jinganji sometime between the years 782-793, and the *honzon*, a Yakushi statue, was made at that time. The Wake clan was one of the most important political families serving the court of Kanmu in the late eighth century. Wake no Kiyomaro served the court of tennōs Kōken (r.749-758; second reign as Shōtoku, 764-770), and Kōnin. He also became one of Kanmu tennō's trusted advisors and was instrumental in the decision to move the capital from Nagaoka to Heian (Kyoto).

A. The Dōkyō Incident

The historiographical arguments proposed by scholars on the Jingoji Yakushi image were based on their analysis of a passage contained in *Ruijū kokushi,* an 892 compilation of historical records (hereafter, *RK*), explaining Wake no Kiyomaro's role in the infamous "Dōkyō Affair" 道鏡事件 and how he came to later establish Jinganji, as well as the temple's relation to Jingoji, both built by the Wake clan.[5] The *RK* passage begins by explaining the establishment of Takaodera 高雄寺 (= Takaosanji 高雄山寺) in 824 by Junna tennō, based

[4] Adachi, "Jingoji Yakushizō," pp. 719-725.

[5] Readers further interested in the history leading up to the founding of Jinganji should consult, "The Standing Image of Yakushi," pp. 36-55.

on a request submitted by the sons of Wake no Kiyomaro; Wake no Matsuna 和気真綱 (783-846) and Nakayo 仲世 (784-852). Here is a translation of this letter from *RK*:[6]

Fascicle 180: Chapter seven, Buddha marga
"Temples"

L1. The heavenly sovereign Junna [823-833], in the first year of Tenchō, ninth moon, senior water day of the monkey (27th day), designated Takaoji as an endowed temple [*jōgakuji* 定額寺] and determined its *tokudo kyōgō* 得度経業 [ordinands, scriptures and ceremonies]. Sir Wake no Matsuna, Senior Fifth Rank, Lower Grade, governor of Kawachi province...

L2. ...and Sir Wake no Nakayo, Junior Fifth Rank, Lower Grade, Junior Clerk of the Board of Censors spoke. We heard that: "The father builds it [Jinganji] and the sons complete it. This is called "great filial piety." To manage public affairs and serve the good is called the "highest loyalty." Consider loyalty. Consider filial piety. How could anyone fail to conform to them [i.e. these ideals]?

L3. Long ago, during the Jingo Keiun period [767-70], the monk Dōkyō used his flattering and deceptive resources [skills] [7] and ascended on top of Mount Genko,[8]

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[6] *Ruijū kokushi* [fascicle 180], in *KT* 6, pp. 259-260. I would like to thank Drs. William Bodiford, Janet Goodwin, Kuriyama Keiko, Herman Ooms, Lori Meeks, Joan Piggott and Ms. Rieko Kamei for their helpful suggestions regarding this translation.

[7] *Jingo Keiun* 神護 景雲 means the (Divine Protection by the Auspicious Clouds). Auspicious multi-colored clouds were sighted in 767 and this was interpreted as an auspicious omen in support of Dōkyō's reign and so this name was given to that particular year. See Ross Bender, "The Hachiman Cult and the Dōkyō Incident" *MN* 34, no. 2 (1979): 142; Yokota Kenichi 横田健一, *Dōkyō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1964), 158.

disgracefully usurping the title of Dharma King. In the end, harboring thoughts of misplaced desires, he distributed improper offerings to the gathering of gods…

L4. … and schemed with his fawning clique. In regard to this, the great god Hachiman was pained by the weakening of the heavenly succession and greatly resented this evil ruffian's ascendance to power. The divine troops sharpened their spears and they fought continuously for many years. Their [forces] were numerous, our [forces] were scant; the wicked were strong and the righteous weak.[9]

L5. The great god bemoaned the fact that his own powers were ineffective. He called upon the powers of the Buddhas for miraculous protection. In (Shōtoku tenno's) dream, he asked for a messenger. [Shōtoku] gave a royal proclamation. The ministers summoned Wake no Kiyomaro of Junior Third Rank, Minister of Popular Affairs…

L6. …and personally informed him of the dream's content. Of the matter pertaining to conferring the heavenly position to Dōkyō, [Shōtoku] ordered him to speak to the great god. Having received the royal order, Kiyomaro headed for Usa Hachiman, at which time the great god gave an oracle: [He proclaimed that] gods are both greater and lesser, and their likes and dislikes…

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[8] According to Morohashi's *Dai kan-wa jiten*, *Genko* 玄扈 (Ch. Xuanhu, refers to a mountain located in Shaanxi province (west of Luonan) and in this context, denotes the tennō's residence. Morohashi Tetsuji, *Dai Kan-wa jiten*, vol. 7, revised edition (Tokyo: Taishūkan Shoten, 1984), 796.

[9] Here, the "demonic gods" probably refers to the Hachiman's "the righteous" battle with the gods that had received "improper offerings" from Dōkyō.

L7. … are not the same. Good gods dislike transgressive rituals and the greedy gods [like to] receive improper offerings. [Hachiman spoke] "I will exalt the royal lineage and help the realm. You shall copy the collected scriptures and make a Buddha image. Recite the Golden Illuminating Wisdom Sutra ten thousand times.[10] Build a temple.

L8. These actions will eliminate the inauspicious improprieties in one day and secure the deities for 10,000 generations. You [Kiyomaro] convey these words [of mine] and do not allow them to be forgotten." Kiyomaro replied to the god, avowing, "After the kingdom is at peace, I will present this to the next ruler…

L9. …and fulfill your vow, even if my bones turn to powder and I suffer death. I will not betray the god's words." Upon returning, [Kiyomaro] presented these words. The time was not right. He was stripped of his rank and punished by imprisonment. Then he was banished to the wilderness. Fortunately through the god's powers, he returned to the capital, and during the reign of Gotawara tennō 後田原天皇 Hōki 11 [780],[11]

L10. … he presented this matter to the sovereign [Kōnin tennō] several times. The sovereign gave a sigh [of joy]. He personally wrote out the royal proclamation. But before the action could be performed, he abdicated his position.[12] Kiyomaro

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[10] This refers to the Golden Illuminating Wisdom Supreme King of Sutras 金光明最勝王経, a sutra that expounds that the four guardian kings protect the ruler who presides over his country in a proper fashion, *Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary* (Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1991), 201-202.

[11] Kōnin tennō was reigning during this time.

[12] Kōnin tennō died in 781.

petitioned again in the second year of Tennō [782]. The former sovereign[13] Kashiwabara...

L11. ...took the previous petition and publicized it throughout the realm. Finally during the Enryaku period [782-806] a private temple was built called Jinganji. The sovereign [Kanmu] praised Kiyomaro for his good services, officially named it "Jinganji," and made it an endowed temple.

L12. Presently, the topographical features of the temple land are dirty and defiled [汚穢] and it cannot [be used] as a ritual hall. We [Wake no Matsuna and Nakayo] humbly request that in lieu of [Jinganji], Takaosanji be designated an endowed temple. It will be named Jin-gokoku so-shingon ji [神護国祚真言寺 Divinely protecting the realm, blessing with true words temple]. [With] one Buddha image, and by means of the one Great Compassion Womb and Diamond World [mandalas],

L13. ... seventeen monks who understand mantras will be appointed to always practice the Three Mysteries [*sanmitsu hōmon*] on behalf of the kingdom. If there is a vacancy, select a practicing monk and appoint him. In addition, twenty-seven newly ordained monks of rectitude...

L14 [*RK*, p. 260]. ...shall be appointed to recite the Sutra of Humane Kings, to protect the kingdom's borders, as well as to pray for the regulation of the winds and rain, and the ripening of the five crops. These sutras will be recited in turn during the day and night without interruption. Seven years later we predict the following accomplishments:

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[13] That is, Kanmu tennō, the former sovereign before Junna tennō.

L15. One, the fulfillment of the great god's vow and, two, the elimination of calamities from the country within our lifetime.

L16. [The tennō] decreed: "Every year one novice shall be appointed and in the land of Bizen, twenty *chō* of rice fields will be awarded for two generations as merit fields for good service. If this temple will sufficiently carry out the god's vow this can be extended for another two generations; the rest, according to request."[14]

The above refers to the formal letter Wake no Matsuna and Nakayo submitted to the Council of State during Junna tennō's reign, requesting permission to transfer the endowed status of their father's temple to their clan temple Takaosanji, because the land on which Jinganji stood was no longer suitable. On his first visit to Usa Hachiman 宇佐八幡 shrine, Kiyomaro made a vow to the deity that he would built a temple in the god's honor. He was not able to follow through with his vow and to submit a request to Kōnin for permission to build Jinganji until 780. Though Kōnin granted this, the sovereign died before this request was realized. Jinganji was finally established during the reign of Kanmu (r. 781 - 806) and received endowed status as an official temple. In the letter submitted by Wake no Matsuna and Nakayo, they first recount the story of Wake no Kiyomaro's involvement with the infamous Dōkyō which led to the subsequent establishment of Jinganji.

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[14] The content of the *Ruijū sandaikyaku* (RS - see fig. 4) passage is almost identical to the RK version. The passage is taken from chapter two, titled "The matter concerning *nenbun dosha* 年分度者 (yearly ordinands)." From comparing the two passages, only slight differences in the content matter are apparent. For example, line 13 mentions the number of monks to be appointed for Takaosanji to be twenty-seven, rather than *RK*'s seventeen, which may be an error in transcription.

Lines 3 – 9 in the *RK* passage then recounts the Dōkyō incident. Dōkyō was a Nara-trained Buddhist priest, known for his spiritual powers of healing, who gained the favor of the retired tennō Kōken.[15] With her support, he quickly rose to power in court from around the 760s and was eventually appointed *Hōō* 法王 (King of the Dharma) in 766, a high ecclesiastical title similar to a title granted to retired tennō's who had taken the tonsure (*Hōō* 法皇).[16] This appointment was legitimated by an edict from the god Hachiman of Usa Shrine in Kyushu and it marked "a crucial state in his ascent toward the throne."[17] By the 760s, the god Hachiman of Usa appears to have had an important political link to the capital.[18] Ross Bender discusses the relations between the Nara period clans, their factional competitions and their vying for political power (by the Fujiwara clan, in particular) leading up to the Dōkyō incident, and the role Hachiman played in sanctioning appointments to political office.[19] The *RK* reference to Dōkyō's distribution of "improper offerings to the gathering

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[15] Kōken ruled as tennō twice. She was the daughter of Shōmu tennō and his royal consort Kōmyo. She reigned as Kōken from 749-758. After Junnin tennō abdicated in 764, she reigned as Shōtoku until her death in 770.

[16] Yokota, *Dōkyō*, p. 153; Bender, pp. 138-139, 141; Naoki Kōjirō, "The Nara State," translated by Felicia G. Bock, *The Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 263-267. According to Naoki, the only other person to hold this title of "Dharma King" was Prince Shōtoku 聖徳太子 (574 – 622), who was given the title Divine Virtue Buddhist Prince (Shōtoku Hōō) and Great Buddhist Prince (Hōō Daiō 法王大王). Naoki, p. 264.

[17] Bender, p. 142.

[18] Ibid., p. 136.

[19] Bender, pp. 126, 136.

of gods and schemed with his fawning clique" may refer to these clans whom Dōkyō tried to bribe, in order to legitimate his own power.

The circumstances that led up to Shōtoku tennō dispatching Kiyomaro to Usa Shrine arose in 768, when Nakatomi Suge no Asomaro (appointed by Dōkyō himself to be chief priest of Usa Hachiman) confirmed Hachiman's oracle recommending Dōkyō's enthronement. With Dōkyō's power and support, the Usa Hachiman Shrines amassed wealth by receiving grants of land in 764 and 766. At this point, it can be inferred that Dōkyō was well aware of the growing importance of the Usa Hachiman shrine, as well as the power of oracles, which he cleverly manipulated.[20] With the prospect of Dōkyō possessing the throne however, Shōtoku may have felt that the royal line was in jeopardy for she had a dream where the Usa Hachiman deity appeared before her. She then dispatched Kiyomaro to Usa Shrine to receive a divine oracle from Hachiman. *RK* passages line 4, on "the divine troops sharpening spearheads and fighting continuously for many years… the wicked were strong and the righteous weak" may be referring to the struggles between supporters of Dōkyō and anti-Dōkyō factions within the court.[21]

Kiyomaro played a crucial role in 769, traveling to Kyushu and then returning to the royal court from Usa Hachiman with an oracle that pronounced Dōkyō unfit to rule. The oracle further declared Dōkyō an imposter. This idea is confirmed in lines 6 -8. Line 7 also

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[20] Ibid., p. 141.

[21] Morse states: The struggle [between clans] was not merely between Dōkyō and the court bureaucracy; it was also part of a power struggle between native clans; in particular the Fujiwara, who wanted all the political power for themselves; and the immigrant clans, such as the Fujii and the Yuge, who supported Dōkyō. Morse, 'Standing Image of Yakushi," p. 47; see also Bender, p. 144.

makes reference to a request made by Hachiman to Kiyomaro for the construction of a temple based on this vow. To fulfill this request, Kiyomaro commissioned Jinganji, which means "the Temple of the Vow to the Deity."

RK's line 9 makes reference to Kiyomaro's return from Usa Shrine and deliverance of the oracle to the tennō. The enraged Dōkyō exiled Kiyomaro and his sister Hiromushi 広虫(730-799), who served as the Shōtoku's Lady-in-Waiting to the provinces of Osumi in southern Kyushu and Higo in western Kyushu respectively. Dōkyō's power did not last long after this, however, especially following the death of Shōtoku in 770. Immediately after her death, Dōkyō was demoted and exiled to Shimotsuke 下野 province (Tochigi prefecture) as the supervisor (*bettō* 別当) for Yakushiji, where he died in 772. With Kōnin's accession to the throne as the new tennō, Kiyomaro and Hiromushi were both reinstated and allowed to return to court.

The *RK* passage states that in Enryaku 12 (793-10), Wake no Kiyomaro was granted permission to allot 58 *chō* of rice fields in Noto province to Jinganji. This denotes that Jinganji was already a fully-functioning temple by 793, and that the principal icon was made between those years.[22] Adachi was the first to argue that the extant Jingoji Yakushi was the original *honzon* of Jinganji, made sometime between 782 and 793 and transferred to Takaosanji in 824 when Jinganji's endowed status was conferred on Takaosanji. With this transfer of status, Takaosanji was officially renamed Jin-gokoku so-shingon ji (Jingoji) in 824.

[22] Adachi, "Jingoji Yakushizō," p. 722.

B. Jinganji's principal icon

Adachi analyzed *Jingoji ryakki* 神護寺略記, a compilation of records documenting Jingoji's temple history to determine the provenance for the Jingoji Yakushi. This record was compiled in 1315, containing two temple inventories, *Kōnin shizaichō* 弘仁資材帳 (compiled during the Kōnin era, 810-824) and *Jingoji jōhei jitsujokuchō* 神護寺承平実録帳 of 931 which listed the temple's assets, including its icons (hereafter *KS and JJ* respectively).[23]

JJ passage notes: [24]

- One statue of a *danzō* (sandalwood image) Yakushi Buddha, five *shaku* and five *sun* tall 五尺五寸.
- Two bodhisattva attendants, 4 *shaku* and 7 *sun* 四尺七寸 in height.
  [These images were enshrined within a curtain made with brocade, donated by the Retired tennō Go-Shirakawa.]

KS also notes that the deity enshrined in the Golden Hall was:

- One *danzō* Yakushi Buddha images, five *shaku* five *sun* tall.[25]

The *KS* and *JJ* passages both mention that the principal icon of the Golden Hall was a sandalwood Yakushi Buddha five *shaku* and five *sun* tall, which Adachi concluded was the present Jingoji Yakushi. The main question regarding the two records was whether the inventories were originally compiled for the temple Jinganji, or for Takaosanji. After careful

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[23] *Jingoji ryakki* 神護寺略記, *KBS*, vol. 2, pp. 257-278. The passage in question is on p. 260.

[24] 奉安置
檀像薬師佛像一軀長五尺五寸、
同脇士菩薩像二軀各四尺七寸、
已上三尊奉安置錦帳内、此錦者爲　後白河院御願被懸之、

[25] Fujita, *Kōkan bijutsu shiryō,* vol. 2, p. 260. "承平実録帳云、檀像薬師佛像一軀長五尺五寸."

examination of these inventories, Adachi concluded that *KS* belonged to Jinganji, because during the Kōnin years (810-824), private tutelary temples were not required by the government to submit their asset reports (*shizaichō* 資材帳) and only state-sponsored temples such as *jōgakuji* were required to do so.[26] Since Jinganji was awarded *jōgaku* status by Kanmu tennō sometime before Kiyomaro's death in 799 and concurrently, Takaosanji did not have that status until 824, Adachi determined that the temple inventory (*KS*) belonged to Jinganji, rather than Takaosanji. From this, he concluded that since both temple inventories listed a 5 *shaku* 5 *sun* Yakushi image whose description matched the extant Jingoji image, the Jingoji Yakushi was none other than the original principal icon made for Jinganji.[27] Adachi's work has been an important contribution to subsequent Jingoji Yakushi studies, and his theory became widely-accepted among Japanese art historians.[28]

Nakano Tadaaki's Refutation

Nakano Tadaaki went against the mainstream idea that the extant Jingoji Yakushi was originally the principal icon for Jinganji by attempting to refute Adachi. Contrary to Adachi's claim, Nakano stated that a Council of State directive 太政官符 abolished the requirement for even temples of endowed status to submit their temple asset reports to the

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[26] Adachi, "Jingoji Yakushizō," p. 721.

[27] Ibid., p. 722.

[28] Mōri Hisashi, Nakano Genzō, Nagasaka Ichirō, and Samuel Morse, all believe the present Jingoji image was originally Jinganji's principal icon.

state after Enryaku 17 (798).[29] He contended that since these asset reports were not required after 798, *Kōnin shizaichō* drafted between the years 810-824 did *not* belong to Jinganji but rather, it was made for Takaosanji, when Kūkai placed three administrative priests (*sangō* 三綱) in the winter of Kōnin 12 (812). He further argued that it was in the interests of the *sangō* to create a private inventory of all of the temple assets from the former Takaosanji in order to keep track of original assets versus newly acquired ones (Shingon Buddhist paraphernalia).[30]

Nakano's theory can be validated by examining the history of Takaosanji more closely. The Wake clan built this temple after the new capital of Heian was established in 794. Although we do not have records of when it was built, the earliest records of Takaosanji appear in Enryaku 21 (802) when Wake no Kiyomaro's sons Hiroyo 広世 and Matsuna organized a religious meeting to study Tendai works, indicating that the temple was fully functioning by 801 [31]

In 805, Saichō performed the first esoteric initiation rite in Japan, attended by eight prominent monks from Nara. This marks the early years for Takaosanji's transformation into a center for esoteric rituals; Jingoji's affiliation to Shingon esoteric Buddhism began as early as 810, when Kūkai was invited to the temple (then, Takaosanji) to perform the esoteric

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[29] Nakano Tadaaki 中野忠明, "Saisetsu: Jingoji Yakushizō no denrai to seisaku nendai (jō)," *Shiseki to bijutsu* 596 (1989): 249. *Ruijū sandaikyaku* 798-1-20 entry, *Ruijū sandaikyaku* [fascicle 3: *Jōgakuji*], *KT* 25, p. 461.

[30] Nakano,"Jingoji Yakushizō no denrai, I," p. 255.

[31] *Fusō ryakki* [fascicle 2], *KT* 12, pp. 114-115.

Niō ritual 仁王法. It is likely that Kūkai's reception to Takaosanji was brought about by Saichō's enthusiastic recommendation.[32] At that time, Saichō was keenly interested in the esoteric teachings that Kūkai had received in Tang China, recommending that his own disciples train under Kūkai. Kūkai himself send his disciple Jitsue 実恵 to Mt. Hiei to attend Tendai lectures, and this mutual exchange eventually led to Saichō writing a letter to Kūkai in 812 (who was residing at Otokunidera 乙訓寺 at the time) suggesting that he reside at Takaosanji and develop a Shingon center there. Kūkai agreed, and in the tenth month of 813, he moved to Takaosanji. Under Kūkai's spiritual and administrative guidance, Takaosanji was reborn as a Shingon temple. In the eleventh month, Kūkai performed a Kongōkai 金剛界 ordination ritual. In the following month, Kūkai held the Taizōkai 胎蔵界 ordination ceremony, attended by Wake no Hiroyo, Wake no Matsuna and Saichō, who all received the initiation. According to Nakano, when Kūkai placed the three temple administrators (*sangō*) at Takaosanji, this finalized Takaosanji/Jingoji's transition from a Tendai temple under Saichō's guidance, to that of Shingon affiliation, under Kūkai's administration.[33]

The official renaming of Takaosanji to Jin-gokoku so-shingonji, also reflects Jingoji's functional responsibilities in performing esoteric ceremonies for the welfare of the state; as mentioned before, this name means "Divinely protecting the realm, blessing with true words temple." With its new name, Jingoji became an active center for esoteric rituals, as denoted

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[32] Nakano,"Jingoji Yakushizō no denrai, I," p. 254.

[33] Ibid, p. 255.

by the word *Shingon* "true words."[34] This is also made apparent by *RK's* reference (line 12) to the two esoteric mandalas of the womb and diamond realms and the appointment of monks who understand the "true words," suggesting the ritual functions of Jingoji:

> It will be named Jin-gokoku so-shingon ji. One Buddha image, and by means of the one Great Compassion Womb and Diamond World [mandalas]. Seventeen monks who understand mantras will be appointed to...[35]

The words "Jin-gokoku" (divinely protecting the realm) and "so" 祚(blessing) also implied royal status and lineage, and embodied the idea of a temple with ritual responsibilities to pray for the protection of the state (*chingo kokka* 鎮護国家). Furthermore, it emphasized the notion of a temple established under the blessings of the gods, i.e., the Hachiman deity and that *chingo kokka* was sanctioned not only by Buddhist deities but by the gods (*kami*) as well.[36]

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[34] According to Abe Ryūichi's work on Kūkai, the word mantra in Japan, especially its Japanese translation as *Shingon* was a term Kukai used to refer generically to his new form of Buddhism that he established in Japan. Abe Ryūichi, *The Weaving of the Mantra* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999): 5.

[35] *Ruijū kokushi* [fascicle 180], *KT* 6, pp. 259-260.

[36] Jinganji, whose *jōgakuji* 定額寺 status was conferred to Takaosanji, was a private temple established by Wake no Kiyomaro based on a personal vow he made to the deity Hachiman at the Usa Hachiman Shrine. The exact location of Jinganji is uncertain. The *Jinnō shōtōki* 神皇正統記 states the temple was located in Kawachi 河内 province (present day Osaka), while *Hachiman gudōki* 八幡愚童訓 claim it was in Yamashiro province (Kyoto), but it is questionable how much we can trust the later sources. According to Nagaoka, the most likely place is in Soeshimo district 添下郡 of Yamato province (present day Nara), where Jinganji owned some land. Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," p. 13. See also Hirano Kunio, *Wake no Kiyomaro* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1964), pp. 207-208.

Nagaoka Ryūsaku's Refutation

Nagaoka Ryūsaku has been one of the most recent and avid proponents refuting the theory that Jingoji Yakushi was made as the *honzon* for Jinganji. Working from Nakano Tadaaki's earlier research, he also argued that Adachi's study did not determine whether the two temple inventories, the *KK* and *JJ* belonged to Jinganji since the meaning of *shizaichō* was not definitive and may have differed from temple to temple during that time. Still, the question remained -- if *jōgakuji* were no longer required after 798 to submit their *shizaichō* to the government (as Nakano Tadaaki claimed), why was it necessary for Jinganji or Takaosanji to create a temple inventory in the first place? Adachi argued that since Takaosanji was not given *jōgakuji* status until 824, it would not have any reason to draft an asset report, and Nakano disagreed by stating that the *sangō* ordered Takaosanji to create one after the temple became a Shingon temple (Jingoji), in order to keep track of their old and new assets.

In support of Nakano's theory, Nagaoka contended that even if temples were not required to officially submit their *shizaichō* to the government, there were cases where temples made asset reports for their own private usage. For example, *Kōryūji engi* notes that during the Enryaku period, a senior prelate named Taihō ran away from the temple, taking with him the temple's private asset report (*ruki shizaichō* 流記資材帳). *Anjōji garan engi shizaichō* 安祥寺伽藍縁起資材帳 of Jōgan 9 (867) was also a private *shizaichō* because it did not have an official government seal 官印 stamped on it.

In addition, there are cases of existing asset reports from temples that were not *jōgakuji* such as *Tado jingūji garan engi shizaichō* 多度神宮寺伽藍縁起資材帳 from Enryaku 7

(788). At the time *Engi shizaichō tokenchakusho senmyō mokuroku* 縁起資材帳図券勅書宣命目録, recorded in the JJ, was made (931), there were at least six kinds of asset reports from Ninna 3 (887) which were drafted when a new senior prelate was appointed to succeed the previous *bettō*.[37]

Based on these examples, it was certainly possible for Takaosanji to have a private inventory of its property. Nagaoka also supported Nakano's position that when the three administrative officers (*sangō*) for Takaosanji were selected and the temple became a government sanctioned temple during the Kōnin era (810-824), there would have been a need to create a temple inventory of its property for the newly established *sangō*.

C. The Issue of "transferring" and "combining" the Jinganji with Takaosanji

Another salient historiographical issue that involves the Jinganji/Takaosanji controversy lies in a Council of the State directive from Tenchō 1 (824-9-27), mentioned in *Ruijū kokushi*, which states:

> Presently, the topographical features [of the temple land] is defiled and it cannot be [used as] a ritual hall. I [Wake no Matsuna] earnestly request that in lieu of [Jinganji], Takaosanji be designated an endowed temple, and its name be called Jin-go koku so-Shingon ji.
> 今此寺、地勢汚穢不檀場、伏望、相替高雄寺、以爲定額、名日神護國祚眞言寺[38]

[37] Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," pp. 14-15.

[38] *Ruijū kokushi* [fascicle 180], *KT* 6, p. 259.

Adachi interpreted the above passage as showing how Takaosanji joined the ranks of *jōgakuji* and was renamed Jingoji.[39] He argued that the land on which Jinganji stood became "unsuitable" for a ritual hall (不檀場) and Jinganji was "transferred" (*aitai* 相替) to Takaosanji. The key point here is that Adachi translated the word *aitai* as "transfer." This idea of "transfer" is also accepted by Samuel Morse in his article on the Jingoji Yakushi, who sees it as a *merger* of the two temples. Morse writes, "In 824, Wake no Matsuna petitioned the court for permission to *combine* [my emphasis] Jinganji with Takaosanji."[40] I find this notion of "transfer" and "combination" problematic, and this will be discussed in the next section.

Here, another reason for Jinganji's "transfer" to Takaosanji will be considered; the defilement of Jinganji's sacred space, which made it necessary to confer its endowed status to Takaosanji. Nagaoka Ryūsaku, focusing on the word "defiled" (*owai*) in the *Ruijū kokushi* passage interpreted the text in the following manner - "the topographical features [of Jinganji] are dirty and defiled and it cannot [be used] for a ritual hall 地勢汚穢不檀場." He stated that the choice of the word "defiled" was particularly meaningful, especially when one compared it to the *Ruijū sandaikyaku* version of the same 824 directive which notes that the land became "sandy and muddy" (i.e. *sadei* 沙泥) rather than *owai* .[41] Nagaoka explained that

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[39] Adachi says, "Jinganji was transferred to Takaosanji 神願寺は高雄寺に移つた" Adachi, "Jingoji Yakushizō," p. 720.

[40] Morse, "Standing Image of Yakushi," p. 48.

[41] Tenchō 1 entry in the *Dajōkanpu* from the *Ruijū sandaikyaku* as follows:
"Presently, because the temple ground [Jinganji] is sandy and muddy, we cannot construct a hall for esoteric ceremonies." *KT* 25, p. 436.

the land on which Jinganji stood had become "unsuitable" for a ritual hall because of certain topographical conditions that had caused the sacred space to become "impure" *kegareru*.[42]

There is a great possibility that *owai* had some religious significance, and meant the "defilement" or "pollution" of sacred space. In Japan, Buddhist notions of "pollution" came to incorporate notions of *kami* worship that included proper ritual purification. Conditions such as blood, menstruation, and disease were regarded as instances of pollution that transgressed what was considered appropriate forms of *kami* worship.[43] By providing a passage from *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* 日本三代実録, Nagaoka explains how the topographical features of land being "sandy and muddy" could be interpreted as being "polluted and unsuitable" for a ritual hall. He gives an entry from Jōgan 13 (871-5-16) which narrates an account of a certain volcanic eruption of a mountain called Chōkaisan 鳥海山 in Hōkai 飽海, Dewa 出羽 province. The passage explains that the eruption created thunderous sounds, burning the rocks and earth, resulting in dark, muddy water overflowing. The area was filled with a foul smell and many dead fish floated on the water, stopping the flow. The account goes on to say that a village elder explained that long ago (during the Kōnin era) a fire had ravaged the mountain and upon divination, it was revealed that it was caused by the deity of

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[42] Nagaoka, "Jingoji Yakushizō no isō," *BK* 359 (1994): 5. Nagaoka bases his discussion on the notion of *kegare,* from Yamamoto Kōji's study on *kegare*. Yamamoto Kōji 山本幸司, *Kegare to Ōharae* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1992).

[43] Carmen Blacker, *Catalpa Bow: A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1986), 41-42.

the mountain Ōmonoimi 大物忌, angered by the defilement caused from the disposal of corpses without proper ceremony. [44]

Nagaoka contends that Jinganji's case was similar, and the "sandy and muddy" land was considered too polluted for a temple. The transfer of Jinganji's sacred icons to the newly consecrated Takaosanji-Jingoji would have been considered highly inappropriate since the people and objects occupying that space would have been seen as defiled as well.[45] To strengthen his point, Nagaoka uses an example of a Council of the State directive from Kasshō 2 (849-12-5) where sacred scriptures and images (from various temples) that became "defiled" [46] were ordered to be collected and stored in a purification temple (*jōji* 浄寺)and the appropriate rituals of worship and *puja* offerings (*raihai kuyō* 礼拝供養) be performed for them.[47] Though the following event happened almost a century earlier, the *Shoku Nihongi* entry of Tenpyō 17 (745-9-19) also offers insight into the significance of sacred mountain temples as "purified sites" for providing the maximum ritual efficacy. The passage explains that because Shōmu tennō was gravely ill, an edict was promulgated where "various monasteries in the capital and purified sites at celebrated mountains were ordered to perform Yakushi *keka* (Buddhist penitence) rituals (幾内諸寺及諸名山浄処行薬師悔過).[48]

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[44] *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* [fascicle 19], *KT* 4, p. 289. Nagaoka, "Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō," p. 6.

[45] Ibid., p. 8.

[46] The directive states that theses were placed in "defilement places" (*aisho* 穢所)

[47] Nagaoka, "Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō," p. 8.

[48] *Shoku Nihongi*, *SNKBT*, vol. 4, pp. 16-17.

Moreover, transferring sacred icons from one temple to another during the early Heian period was an extremely delicate (and potentially dangerous) enterprise. An entry from *Ruijū kokushi* gives an account of the transfer of four Guardian King 四天王 statues from a temple called Ōnojō Shitennōji 大野城四天王寺 to Konkōmyōji 金光明寺 in the province of Chikuzen 筑前 in Enryaku 20 (801-12-1).[49] An epidemic occurred shortly after this transfer, so the temple authorities concluded it was a curse sent by local gods angered by the transfer of the icons, and promptly returned them to the original temple.

The above passage demonstrates that icons were closely tied to their temples, and it was unlikely that the Jinganji images were transferred to Jingoji. If for some reason the transfer of Jinganji's ritual icons did occur, Nagaoka reasons that the event would have been significant enough for some kind of ceremony to be performed and noted officially, but nothing is to be found concerning events suggesting the transfer of the temple icons.[50] In any event, Nagaoka demonstrates that the Jinganji icon could not have been moved to Takaosanji following the transfer of its *jōgakuji* status, since Jinganji's land was unsuitably defiled.

The meaning of Takaosanji's jōgakuji status

In the previous section, I argued that it was not possible for Jinganji and its inventory to be transferred and combined with those of Takaosanji. It would be more

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[49] *Ruijū kokushi* [fascile 180], *KT* 6. pp. 258-259.

[50] Nagaoka, "Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō," p. 8.

accurate to say that Jinganji's endowed status was designated to Takaosanji *in lieu of* Jinganji. This becomes even more evident when we examine the meaning behind the notion of *jōgakuji*. During the Heian period, *jōgakuji* were formally private temples that became recognized and endowed by the government. The word "*jō*" 定 means "determine" but just what this indicates in regards to Heian period *jōgakuji* poses some difficulties. In fact, the idea of *jōgakuji* embodied several different notions.[51] These were:

1. A limited or "determined" number of temples (other than *daiji* 大寺 and *kokubunji* 国分寺) sponsored by the government.
2. A temple that received a "determined" amount of economic aid and supplies from the government, such as cultivated rice fields.
3. A temple where a "determined" amount of government appointed monks (*kansō* 官僧) is appointed to administer the temple.
4. A temple that is recognized by the government and often granted an official name by the tennō.

From Tenchō 1 (824), the word *jōgaku* appears quite frequently in historical sources.[52] All of the above definitions fit the circumstances for both Jinganji and Takaosanji. The first definition of *jōgaku,* as a limited or determined number of temples that could be accorded government sponsorship, explains the need for switching and conferring (*aitai*) the endowed status from Jinganji to Takaosanji. It is important to note that since there was a

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[51] Nakai Shinkō 中井真孝, "Jōgakuji shikō," in *Nihon shūkyōshi ronshū*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1976), 139-144.

[52] *Kokushi daijiten*, vol. 14, p. 464.

determined number of temples that could receive *jōgaku* status in a given period of time, this status needed to be transferred from Jinganji to Takaosanji.

Second, though one cannot infer the exact amount of economic aid (definition no. 2) granted to Takaosanji when it was accorded *jōgaku* status from the *RK* passage, it is clear that from line 15 that the temple received economic sustenance in the form of cultivated rice fields from the government (definition no. 2).[53]

Third, Takaosanji was clearly awarded a "determined" amount of monks to administer the temple, as is apparent in the following *RK* passage: Line 1: "...designated Takaoji as an endowed temple and determined its *tokudo kyōgō*,"; line 13: "Seventeen monks who understand mantras will be appointed to always practice the Three Mysteries..." and line 18: "In addition, twenty-seven newly ordained monks of rectitude will be appointed to recite the Sutra of Humane Kings to protect the kingdom's borders."[54]

Fourth, the idea of a state-sanctioned temple is contained in the renaming of Takaosanji, a Wake clan temple with an officially state-sanctioned name of *Jin-gokoku so-shingonji* upon receiving *jōgaku* status. These factors all tend to show that the transfer of Takaosanji from a Tendai affiliated temple to a Shingon one with the establishment of the *sangō* in 813, the official renaming of Takaosanji to Jingoji, and the reason behind the transfer of Jinganji's *jōgaku* status to Takaosanji, all provide strong evidence that the present Yakushi icon was made specifically for Takaosanji, rather than Jinganji.

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[53] Lines 15-16: "... in the land of Bizen, a *kōden* worth twenty *chō* of paddy fields, will be transferred for two generations as a reward for good service."

[54] *Ruijū kokushi* [fascicle 180], *KT* 6.

3. Saichō, the Wake clan and the Jingoji Yakushi

A. Enryakuji Konpon chūdō and Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall Yakushi

In the previous chapter, I outlined Nakano Tadaaki's theory that Saichō's Konpon chūdō Yakushi was modeled after the Tōshōdaiji Golden Hall wood-core dry-lacquer Yakushi. There, the notion that Saichō's choice for a standing Yakushi image in his main worship hall was perhaps influenced by Ganjin, the founder of Tōshōdaiji, was explored. In this section, the Jingoji Yakushi's connection to the Tōshōdaiji Yakushi images will be discussed, in order to suggest that Saichō's Yakushi may have been the prototype for the Jingoji image.

Numerous scholars have pointed out that a plain-wood standing Yakushi statue from the Tōshōdaiji former lecture hall group was a direct stylistic prototype for the Jingoji Yakushi, further strengthening the association between the three temples, Tōshōdaiji, Enryakuji, and Jingoji in regard to the deity Yakushi.[55] The Tōshōdaiji lecture hall images, with their emphasis on corpulent, full, heavy bodies, reflected new forms and techniques from Tang China introduced by Ganjin and artists he brought back to Japan. The rendering of powerful, deeply incised drapery folds is also seen in the Tōshōdaiji group and reflects Central Asian trends that became popular in mid eighth century Tang China [56]

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[55] For photographs of the Tōshōdaiji images, consult *Tōshōdaiji*, vols. 12-13 of *Nara rokudaiji taikan*, ed. Nara Rokudaiji Taikan Kankōkai (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999).

[56] See Asai, "Jingoji Yakushi sanzon o megutte, III," pp. 4-14; Matsumoto Masaaki, "Kōnin chokoku no kigen," in *Kokka*, no. 721 (1952): 138-147; Nishikawa Shinji, "Ganjin zō to mokuchōgun," in *Nara no tera 20: Tōshōdaiji* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1975), 1-16; Morse, "Standing Image of Yakushi," p. 38.

The Jingoji Yakushi is seen as a representative work from this transitional phase in the late eighth and early ninth century where unpainted wood images came to replace dry-lacquer ones.[57] In comparing the Jingoji image to the Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall Yakushi Buddha, Asai Kazuharu explains that both have round, corpulent bodies accentuated by thick thighs, giving the appearance of solidity and denseness. Asai notes however that the similarity ends here, since the Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall Yakushi is still a reinterpretation of Tang Chinese marble Buddha statues (Asai does not give a specific example, but he is probably referring to something like the marble Buddha from ca 750 from the Shaanxi Provincial Museum 陝西省博物館).[58] The Jingoji Yakushi on the other hand, is clearly a departure from this, in the sense that there is an attempt on the part of the sculptor to draw out the striking features of the wood.[59] Nagaoka Ryūsaku states: "the sculptor utilizes the material freely and very consciously. He consciously varies his chiseling technique in areas to compliment and fully utilize the material of the wood."[60]

This attempt to draw out the character of the wood rests on the fact that the Jingoji image was conceived as a "sandalwood image" (*danzō*). As discussed earlier, icons made from *kaya* and other indigenous, high-quality aromatic woods (*hinoki, keyaki*) were either left unpainted or painted with polychrome to give the appearance of a continental sandalwood

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[57] Asai, "Jingoji Yakushi sanzon wo megutte, IV," p. 21.

[58] Nishikawa Shinji, "Ganjin," p. 7, fig. 7. See Nishikawa, p.7, pl. 7 for a photograph of the stone Buddha image from Shenxi Provincial Museum.

[59] Asai, "Jingoji Yakushi sanzon wo megutte, IV," p. 22.

[60] Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," p. 11.

image.[61] Contrary to earlier studies that considered *hinoki* as the predominant type of wood used in making *ichiboku* images in the late Tenpyō and early Heian periods, a recent study showed many of them were in fact made from *kaya.* According to this research by Kaneko Hiroaki and colleagues who scientifically tested and analyzed eighth and ninth century wood sculptures from all regions of Japan, they concluded that irrespective of statue size, or sculpturing style, *kaya* was the main type of wood used to make these *danzō* images.[62]

The same study also showed that the Jingoji Yakushi and Tōshōdaiji lecture hall images, previously believed to have been made from *hinoki,* were in fact *kaya.*[63] Kaneko et al. also examined eighth century dry-lacquer and clay statues in order to compare wood selection (used for their armature portion) with plain-wood images and found that *hinoki* and *keyaki* were consistently employed over *kaya* wood in dry-lacquer and clay statue armatures.[64] Thus, their findings revealed that this conscious selection of wood (*hinoki*, *keyaki* and other

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[61] For general studies of *danzō*, see Mōri Hisashi, "Heian jidai no danzō ni tsuite," *Shisō* 13 (1958), also reprinted *Nihon chōkokushi no kenkyū* (Hōzōkan 1970); Kuno Takeshi, "Danzōyō chōkoku no keifu," *BG* 43 (1960) also reprinted in *Heian shoki chōkokushi no kenkyū.*; Suzuki Yoshihiro 鈴木善博, "Hakuki to danzō chōkoku," *Bijutsushi* 107 (1979); Inoue Tadashi 井上正, "Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō to sono shūhen, in Domon Ken 土門拳*: Nihon no chōkoku 2: Heianki* (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1980), 174-185.

[62] Kaneko Hiroaki 金子啓明 et al., "Nihon ni okeru mokuzō no jushu to yōzaikan II – hachi, kyū seiki o chūshin ni," *Museum* 583 (2003): 5-44. The use of *kaya* for making sculptures was not limited to the Kinki region but was found in parts of Kyushu and Chugoku. Exceptions were found in regions such as Tōhoku where *kaya* did not grow or were scarce; in this case, they found that *keyaki* was typically employed.

[63]Nagaoka, 'Sanji no reizō," p. 8.

[64] In the case of dry-lacquer images, the only example of a *kaya* sculpture was the Nara Horyūji 法隆寺 Daihōzōden 大宝蔵殿 standing Kannon image. In the case of clay sculptures, *kaya* was employed for the wooden armature in the Ōita Tempukuji flanking bodhisattva images.

kinds) for making wood armatures for dry-lacquer and clay images reflected a structural (technical) concern; whereas the use of *kaya* for plain-wood images strongly suggested a religious reason.[65]

Of *danzō* images made in Japan, images of Yakushi and Kannon were the most numerous. The popularity of Jūichimen Kannon bodhisattva is evident from the fact that it was clearly stipulated in scripture to make sandalwood images of this deity. The reason behind the large number of Yakushi conceived as sandalwood images, however, is not as clear-cut, though in the previous chapter I suggested that Saichō's Yakushi was considered a *danzō* image. Asai contends that almost every Yakushi image conceived as a sandalwood icon had a miracle story associated with its creation.[66]

The significance of using rare, high-quality aromatic wood was based on the belief that such wood was particularly potent and spiritually efficacious.[67] Related to this notion is the belief in numinous trees (*reiki shinkō* 霊木信仰), an indigenous form of belief and practice where people believed that certain trees embodied a kind of spiritual force, and was something to be revered. Certain living trees were believed to be sacred and regarded as *yorishiro* 依代, objects in which *kami* temporarily descended and resided.[68] Inoue explains that this particular type of *kami* worship later merged with the devotion of sandalwood images.[69]

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[65] Kaneko et al., "Mokuzō no jushu to yōzaikan," p. 11.

[66] Asai, "Jingoji Yakushi sanzon o megutte III," p. 9.

[67] Ibid., p.13, and footnote 89.

[68] Mori Mizue, "Ancient and Classical Japan: The Dawn of Shinto," in *Shinto – A Short History*, ed. Inoue Nobutaka, trans., Mark Teeuwen and John Breen (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 15.

Many scholars considered the Jingoji Yakushi within the context of this tradition, interpreting the stocky, heavy body as a conceptualization of a *yorishiro*, associating the Jingoji Yakushi to local *kami* cults.[70] Nagaoka states that if one examined the body of the Jingoji image in detail, one could see that the extremely exaggerated roundness of its bodily form does not project a sense of a human body. Rather, it has a look of a massive tree in which a spirit (魂 *tamashii)* resides.[71] Inoue explains that this indigenous practice allowed for smooth assimilation with the continental practice of making Buddhist images.[72] Yakushi, as a medicine deity, was particularly suited for merging the continental *danzō* tradition with the indigenous world-view of *reiki shinkō*.[73]

Iconographically, the similarity between the Jingoji Yakushi and the Konpon chūdō Yakushi can also be found in the mudrās. Nagaoka observed that the Yakushi's left hand was bent at an acute angle (almost ninety degrees). As discussed in Chapter Two with the example of the Hōkaiji Yakushi, this mudrā, combined with the *semui'in*, was a rare variant form of the *semui yogan'in*. This is similar to the one described in the *Shijō hiketsu*, where the monk Jien was able to view Saicho's Yakushi during his visit to Enryakuji and noted that it

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[69] Inoue Tadashi, "Shinbutsu shūgō no seishin to zōkei," in *Shinbutsu shūgō to shugen*, ed. Tanabe Saburōsuke (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1989), 50-108.

[70] See Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," p. 8. Andō Yoshika 安藤佳香,"Kachiodera Yakushi sanzonzō kō - shinbutsu shūgō no ishōsa toshite," *BG* 163 (1985): 8-49; Inoue, p.70.

[71] Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," p.11.

[72] Inoue, p. 75.

[73] Andō, p. 48.

displayed an uncommon mudrā where the left hand looked like it was thrusting out of its sleeve, the arm kept close to the side and the palm facing upward with fingers outstretched and slightly bent.[74]

B. Saichō and the Wake brothers

Associations between Saichō's Yakushi enshrined in the Konpon chūdō and the Jingoji image can also be made by observing the close relationship Saichō had with the patron of Jingoji, Wake no Hiroyo and his younger brother Matsuna. To reiterate, the *honzon* of Takaosanji was a standing Yakushi, 5 *shaku* 5 *sun* tall (about 161 centimeters), and this measurement was religiously significant since it was exactly the same height as the Yakushi that Saichō had purportedly carved and installed in Enryakuji's Konpon chūdō. According to *Jingoji ryakki*, Takaosanji's main sanctuary was 3 bays wide, surrounded by corridors (*hisashi* 廂) on all four sides, where the Yakushi would have been enshrined.[75] This cypress-bark roofed hall was called the Konpon dō, strongly suggesting a connection to the Saichō – Enryakuji lineage.[76] In other words, the Jingoji Yakushi and the Enryakuji Konpon chūdō images were not only similar in iconography, but also shared similar ritual associations.[77]

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[74] Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," pp. 18-19; Tsuda Tetsuei, "Iwate Daikōji no Yakushi nyoraizō," in *BG* 262 (2002): 116.

[75] After the temple was renamed Jingoji, its Golden Hall was expanded to 5 bays wide and 4 bays deep.

[76] See *Jingoji ryakki* quoting the *Jōhei jitsurokuchō*. Fujita, *Kōkan bijutsu shiryō*, vol. 2, p. 260.

[77] Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," p. 16.

Here, I propose the hypothesis that Saichō may have been responsible for installing the Jingoji Yakushi at Takaosanji. In order to explore this issue, we will examine Saichō's relationship to Takaosanji and the Wake family. Though there is no direct evidence showing that the Wake family sought out Saichō in the commissioning of their *honzon*, it is highly possible that he was consulted for the making of the standing Yakushi, if we consider the Wake brothers' avid patronage of Saichō during the early years of Takaosanji's establishment.

History of Takaosanji

Before proceeding to a discussion of Saichō's association with Takaosanji, I would first like to briefly recapitulate the temple's early history. The temple was built in the northwest mountains overlooking Heian, directly opposite Hieizanji (Enryakuji), which guarded the northeast side of the capital. Before being renamed Jingoji in 824, it was a private clan temple belonging to the Wake family, but it is not clear whether Wake no Kiyomaro built it during his lifetime or whether it was established by one of his sons, Hiroyo, Matsuna, or Nakayo. As mentioned earlier, Takaosanji appears in historical sources for the first time in the first month of 802, the year Wake no Hiroyo and Matsuna sponsored a Lotus Sutra lecture meeting at Takaosanji, to which Saichō was invited. I will deal with this event a little later. From this we can assume that Takaosanji was built after the Heian capital was established in 794 and before 802, and that the temple was fully operational by 801.

There is also a good reason to believe that the Wake brothers chose the site as a burial ground for their father, who died in 799.[78]

Wake no Hiroyo and Saichō

Wake no Hiroyo (date of birth and death unknown) and Matsuna, were avid supporters of Saichō. Hiroyo, the eldest son, began his career at the Bureau of Education (*daigakuryō* 大学寮). He eventually rose to the head of the bureau, and also established the family's school and library (Kōbun'in 弘文院) which contained several thousand volumes. Hiroyo also held a number of high government offices during Kanmu's reign such as Assistant Master (*Shō* 少輔) and Master (*Taifu,* also read as *Daifu* and *Tayū* 大輔) of the Ministry of Personnel (Shikibushō 式部省) and then Vice Controller of the Left (*sachūben* 左中弁) in the Ministry of Central Affairs (Nakatsukasashō 中務省).[79] Matsuna also began his career at the Bureau of Education and served in various government posts, including Assistant Master and Master in the Ministries of Civil Administration (Jibushō 治部省), Central Affairs, Justice (Gyōbushō 刑部省), and Popular Affairs (Minbushō 民部省).

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78 Hirano Kunio 平野邦雄, *Wake no Kiyomaro* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1964), p. 208. Based on the fact that the Wake brothers sponsored a Lotus Sutra Lecture meeting at Takaosanji in 802, Nakano Tadaaki argues that Takaosanji was built by late 801. He believes that Wake no Hiroyo was a follower of Saichō's teachings and that it is likely that he was consulted for the building of Takaosanji (Nakano draws the similarity in the name of Hieizanji, the temple that Saichō established to Takaosanji and conjectures that Saichō may have conferred the name). Nakano believes that Hiroyo built Takaosanji under the guidance of Saichō.

79 Also often translated as "Ministry of Ceremonial."

Tsuji Zennosuke has suggested that Hiroyo and Matsuna's early support of Saichō was due to their father's connection to the latter.[80] According to *Eizan daishiden*, a Lotus Sutra Lecture (*Hokke kōe* 法華講会) was sponsored by Hiroyo and Matsuna at Takaosanji in Enryaku 21 (802-1-19).[81] Zengi 善議, along with fourteen eminent monks (*daitoku* 大徳) from Nara were invited to each give a lecture on the Lotus Sutra. It is generally believed that the lectures were intended as a memorial service to honor Matsuna and Hiroyo's aunt, Hiromushi 広虫 (730-799), exiled during the Dōkyō incident and later reinstated, since the nineteenth day of the first month corresponded to three years and a day after her death.[82]

In the previous year (801), Saichō himself had held a ceremony at Enryakuji called *Shimotsuki-e* 霜月会 where he invited ten eminent monks from the Seven Great Temples of Nara to give a series of lectures on the Lotus Sutra at the Konpon chūdō. [83] The Wake brothers undoubtedly heard about the lecture, and sponsored their own at Takaosanji the

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[80] Saeki Arikiyo 佐伯有清, *Wakaki hi no Saichō to sono jidai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1994), 168-169 and Tsuji Zennosuke 辻善之助, *Nihon bukkyōshi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1960), 268.

[81] *Eizan daishiden*, in *Dengyō Daishi zenshū* (*bekkan*), vol. 5. (Tokyo: Tendaishū Shūten Kankōkai, 1912), 8-9.

[82] *Nihon kōki* gives the date 799-1-20 as the day she died.

[83] *Shimotsukie* is a Lotus Sutra Lecture Meeting held at the Great Lecture Hall of Enryakuji in eleventh month, fourteenth day for 10 days. The monks who attended the lecture were: Shōyū 勝猷, Hōki 奉基, Chōnin 寵忍, Kengyoku 賢玉, Saikō 歳光, Kōshō 光証, Kanbin 観敏, Jikō 慈誥, Anpuku 安福, and Genyō 玄耀. The Seven Great Temples of Nara were Tōdaiji, Gangōji, Kōfukuji, Daianji, Yakushiji, Saidaiji and Hōryūji.

following year.[84] Of the fourteen Nara monks who were invited to give a lecture at Takaosanji, ten of them were the same priests who attended the Lotus Sutra lecture meeting organized by Saichō the previous year.

C. Saichō's role in the Takaosanji Lotus Sutra Lectures

Saichō's role in the 802 lectures held at Takaosanji has been the center of some controversy among scholars. Traditional accounts viewed the date 802-1-19 as the day when the invitations were issued and that the actual lectures began from the middle of the fourth month and continued for five months until the middle of the ninth month. Others maintained that the lectures commenced in the middle of the seventh month until sometime in the ninth month.[85] Others scholars are of the opinion that though the lecture series began in the first month, Saichō was invited to attend only from the fourth month, almost three months after the lectures had begun. Since Saichō was not invited to the lectures from the beginning, those supporting this view generally believe in a more peripheral role for Saichō at the Takaosanji lecture.[86]

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[84] Saeki believes that Matsuna and Hiroyo had attended the Lotus Sutra Lecture held at Enryakuji that Saichō organized in 801. For further details, see Saeki, *Saichō,* pp. 168-170.

[85] Saeki, *Saichō*, p. 173. See also Shioiri Ryōchū 塩入亮忠, *Dengyō Daishi* (Tokyo: Nihon Hyōronsha, 1937).

[86] Sonoda Kōyū 薗田香融 and Andō Toshio 安藤俊雄, *Saichō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1974): 478-479. Paul Groner also maintains this view. He believes that Saichō was not invited to Takaosanji lectures from the beginning because he was "still was not known well enough to have been included." Groner, *Saichō*, p. 36.

This controversy is based on a problematic passage from *Eizan daishiden* which records a letter Wake no Hiroyo wrote to Saichō inviting him to visit Takaosanji on the following day after the summer.[87] This has been interpreted as the day after the start of the Buddhist training season (*geango* 夏安居).[88] Normally, the *geango* lasted from the sixteenth day of the fourth month to the fifteenth day of the seventh month. Thus, scholars who believed that the Takaosanji lecture began on 802-1-19 argued that Hiroyo requested Saichō's attendance at Takaosanji from the day after the *geango* period started, on 802-4-16. However, it is unlikely that Hiroyo would request Saichō's attendance the day after the Buddhist *ango* began, when monks were expected to stay in strict cloister. Thus, it would be more logical to assume that Hiroyo's request referred to the day after the *geango* ended, in the middle of the seventh month.[89]

In a more recent study on this matter, Saeki Arikiyo has maintained that the 802-1-19 date referred to the day the actual lectures commenced at Takaosanji but disagreed with Sonoda's view that Saichō attended the lectures from 802-4-16. He contends that in the letter Hiroyo wrote to Saichō, the main objective was to invite Saichō to Takaosanji for a

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[87] "The day after the summer [training season] is completed, please come down to Takao and give us your instructions before hand. 夏終明日降臨高雄預加指撝." Saeki, *Saichō*, p. 171; *Eizan daishiden*, in *Dengyō Daishi zenshū* (*bekkan*), vol. 5 (Tokyo: Tendaishū Shūten Kankōkai, 1912), 84-85.

[88]The rainy season when monks stayed inside the monastery, practicing meditation, studying sutras, and attending lectures.

[89] Saeki, *Saichō*, p. 172. Among copies of *Eizan daishiden*, some record that Hiroyo requested Saichō's attendance on the day after the official end of the summer period, and from this, some scholars concluded that Hiroyo requested Saichō at the end of the *ango* period, i.e., on 802-7-16.

consultation on the Lotus Lecture *before* it was held. This is based on the following lines in the letter: "Please give us your instructions beforehand" 預加指撝 and "As for miscellaneous matters, we can decide on them after we actually meet and the details will be presented at that point." 種種之事可奉面量定. [90]

Furthermore, in *Hiei daishi gyōshaku* 比叡大師行迹, written by Enchin, the author also wrote that Zengi and ten or so eminent monks (*daitoku* 大徳) were invited to give lectures on the Lotus Sutra at Takaosanji. According to Enchin, Saichō was invited to Takaosanji not as a lecturer but as a *shōja* 証者, a kind of referee who decided disputed issues (which were more like debates) and declared the winners and the losers.[91] From this, it becomes clear that Saichō was invited to Takaosanji in the seventh month of 801, six months *before* the actual ceremony was held, no doubt to help with the preliminary arrangements for the big event of 802. Saichō himself had held a Lotus Sutra lecture earlier during that year, at Enryakuji. The fact that he was chosen to act as judge at the lectures demonstrates that he attended them from the very beginning, rather than midway through the event.[92]

There is some kind of religious significance in combining Lotus Sutra lectures with Yakushi images, though this association is not easily decipherable. In her book *Hiraizumi*, Mimi Yiengpruksawan has observed that in the twelfth century, an important temple such as

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[90] Saeki, *Saichō*, p. 172. *Eizan daishiden,* in *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, vol. 5, p. 9.

[91] The Lotus Sutra lectures were set up more like doctrinal debates where the participants from the different institutions were pitted against each other. The *shōgi* 証義, also known as *ryūgi* 竪義, were the judges of these debates.

[92] Saeki, *Saichō*, pp. 174-175.

Motsūji in the Hiraizumi region was a center for healing, using the Tendai practice of combining references to the Lotus Sutra and Yakushi images in multiple representations.[93]

Furthermore, Nagaoka postulates a close association between Yakushi images and the Lotus Sutra by quoting from *Seireishū* 性霊集, a collection of poems. In this collection, Kūkai mentions that in Tenchō 4(827-9), images of Yakushi Buddha, Nikkō and Gakkō bodisattvas and the Lotus Sutra Mandala 蓮華法曼荼羅 were made in memory of the late Prince Iyo 伊予親王, Kanmu tennō's third son, who had died in Daido 2 (807). Twenty priests, including Kūkai were invited to attend the Lotus Sutra Lectures gathering.[94] Nagaoka explains, " … these Yakushi images perhaps functioned to create a "purifying place 浄処."[95] The rationale behind the Tendai practice of combining the Lotus Sutra with Yakushi becomes clear when we consider that the Lotus Sutra was the most important scripture for the Tendai school and emphasized healing practices. While Yakushi does not play a role in the Lotus Sutra, the scripture emphasizes the notion of healing by featuring a bodhisattva known as Bhaiṣajya-rāja (King of Healing). In fact, according to Raoul Birnbaum's study,

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93 Mimi Hall Yiengpruksawan, *Hiraizumi: Buddhist Art and Regional Politics in Twelfth-Century Japan* (Harvard East Asian Monographs, no. 171, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center 1998), 105.

94 Nagaoka, "Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō," p. 12. *Seireishū* was a ten-volume collection of poems written by Kūkai and compiled by his disciple Shinzei 真済. In volume 6, there is a vow written by Kūkai on behalf of Junna tennō who donated ritual implements to Tachibanadera in the Yamato province for the late Prince Iyo, who died in Daidō 2 (807). *Henjō hakki seireishū*, vol. 6, *Tenchō tennō's vow made to the late senior noble of the Ministry of Central Affairs, by donating fields and ritual implements to Tachibanadera* (天長天皇為故中務卿親王捨田及道場支具入橘寺願文) in Watanabe, Shōkō 渡辺照宏 and Miyasaka Yūshō 宮坂宥勝 ed., *Sangōshiiki, Seireishū*, (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1965), 290.

95 Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," p. 16.

Bhaiṣajya-rāja has three significant roles in the Lotus Sutra – 1) as *an auditor* – where he appears in the general assembly of bodhisattvas who have gathered to hear the Buddha preach 2) as *an active participant,* where he is an representative of the general assembly and is engaged in an active conversation with the Buddha Shakyamyuni, 3) as a *central figure* – where the Buddha recounts the Bhaiṣajya-rāja's most significant past life or his most important teachings.[96]

Birnbaum believes that the Lotus Sutra is a key text in the traditions of Buddhist healing deities. He states:

> The analysis of the quotes amassed for each of these categories is based on the belief that the symbology of the Lotus Sutra is precise and intentional, and that names of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are highly relevant to the teachings that addressed to them, or with which they are associated. In accordance with this belief, it is held that when Sakyamuni chooses to address certain teachings to Bhaiṣajya-rāja, it is because these teachings relate naturally to the function of healing. Similarly, that which Bhaiṣajya-rāja offers himself (through his own words) is seen as highly relevant to his healing function. Since the extraordinary devotion of Bhaiṣajya-rāja in past lives has led to his three past lives discussed by Sakyamuni further amplify the meaning of healing and the Healer in early Mahayana teachings.[97]

Since Yakushi was the most important deity at Mt. Hiei during Saichō's lifetime and since the Lotus Sutra was likewise considered to be the core of Tendai teachings and faith, it makes sense that Yakushi imagery came to be paired with the teachings expounded in the Lotus to further underscore spiritual and physical healing.

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[96] Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha*, p. 26.

[97] Ibid., p. 27.

4. Meanings and Functions

A. The Yakushi's special meaning

Though only 170.6 centimeters tall, the Jingoji Yakushi carries a dignified presence, with a heavy, unproportionally rendered lower body, and massive, grotesquely exaggerated limbs. It makes the *semui* mudrā with the right and holds a medicine pot in its left hand, though unfortunately, the jar, the right hand and left fingers are later restorations.[98] One notable characteristic of the Yakushi is its extremely stern countenance, suggesting a slightly minacious presence. In the dark hall under the flickering candlelight, the Yakushi is even more impressive and formidable. The head is large with a highly exaggerated *nikkei*, forming a tall protuberance, while the ears are large and the lobes are greatly elongated, almost touching the shoulders. The determined, stern gaze held by the image is accentuated by the long, sweeping arched brows, sharp, thin eyes that point upward on each end, and a large, firm nose with fleshy nostrils. It is not at all an expression of great compassion, typical of Buddha images. The Jingoji Yakushi's harsh countenance is further accentuated by its fleshy, prominent chin and full, pouting lips that curve slightly down in an expression of determination.

Though the Yakushi image is mostly unpainted, the face has subtle touches of color. The eyes are painted with black and white pigment, the lips with red, and the moustache with black. Interestingly, the surface of his face has not be polished smoothly like the rest of the body, but retains small chisel marks, highly reminiscent of the eleventh and twelfth

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[98] *Nihon chōkokushi kiso shiryō shūsei* notes that the medicine jar, left ear lobe, left fingers, right hand, parts of the drapery hem and paint application are restorations. *NCKSS*, vol. 2, p. 4.

century chisel-carving (*natabori*) images found in eastern and northern Japan.[99] Based on the high level of polishing applied to the rest of his body, it is highly unlikely that the artist left the facial details in such a manner from negligence, but rather, they must have been intentionally, most likely to accentuate the materiality of the *kaya* wood.[100]

Another striking feature is the manner in which the drapery folds on the Yakushi were executed. The carving detail, particularly on the drapery folds (*emon* 衣文) also enhances the impressiveness of the image. There is a conscious utilization of the irregular lines made by the folds, rather than of smooth, well-proportioned lines.[101] For example, the folds are incised in an unnatural manner as if to create a marked effect, particularly around Yakushi's chest and at the hem. The hem of the skirt-like garment (*kun*, see pl. A) is made to look like irregular waves, which seems to depict some sort of movement.[102] Furthermore, the drapery folds on the right and left sides are executed in sharp contrast to each other. While the folds of the robe flow softly over the right arm, the fabric cascading down from the left shoulder are rendered with powerful, deeply incised, concentric folds.[103]

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[99] An excellent color photo clearly showing the chisel marks on the surface of the Jingoji Yakushi's face can be found in Shimizu Masumi ed., *Nyorai*, in *Nihon no butsuzō daihyakka*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Gyōsei, 1990), 112-113.

[100] I thank Donald F. McCallum for suggesting that the irregularity produced by the faceting tends to enliven the surface as the light plays over it.

[101] Nagaoka,"Sanji no reizō," p. 6.

[102] Ibid., pp. 6-8.

[103] See ibid., pp.10-11 for photographs of the side views.

Numerous scholars have attempted to interpret the specific meaning of the Jingoji Yakushi. Nakano Genzō has been particularly vocal in suggesting that the Yakushi was commissioned by Wake no Kiyomaro in fear of Dōkyō's vengeful spirit (*onyrō* 怨霊), and that the statue's awe-inspiring countenance was specifically designed to pacify and subdue this *onryō* through the performance of Buddhist repentance rituals called *keka* 悔過.[104] Asai Kazuharu has also argued that the image's main function was the pacification of *onryō*.[105] Given its stern countenance, the chisel-marks left on the face and the intensity of the carving, we must assume that there was indeed an intentional decision on part of the commissioner of the image to assign a special meaning (and thus function) to it.

The Jingoji Yakushi's particular ritual function is expressed not only by its peculiar form and countenance, but it is also suggested by the long, thin sash that the image wears over the right arm, an extremely rare feature found in standing Buddha images of this time period. While on first glance, the thin sash looks like the *henzan*, both Asai Kazuharu and Nagaoka Ryūsaku contend that in the case of the Jingoji Yakushi, it represents a separate piece of fabric called *ōhi* 横被.[106]

As a general rule, statues of tathāgatas in China and Japan wore the Indian religious habit consisting of the *kesa* (Skt. kāsāya), *sōgishi* 僧支祇 (Skt. samkāsikā), and *kun* (Skt.

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[104] Nakano Genzō 中野玄三, "Jingoji Yakushi nyorai ryūzō sairon: Tamba kokubunji shūhen no kodai chōkoku o sanshō shite," *BG* 234 (1997): 57-86.

[105] Asai, "Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte, IV," p. 12.

[106] Asai, "Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte, III," p. 4; Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," p. 6.

nirvāsana) **[see fig. A]**.[107] This was adopted from the basic dress code of Indian Buddhist monks, though the tathāgata images were rarely represented wearing the monastic undergarment *henzan*, commonly found on images of arhats in China.[108] According to Yoshimura Rei's study on East Asian monks' habits, this combination of the Indian monk's robe became more complex, with Chinese elements such as the *kansan* 汗衫 and *henzan* added to the Indian prototype.[109]

Yoshimura subdivided the monastic dress code into four basic types: A) *kun* 裙 and *kesa* combination; e.g. Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall Yakushi B) *kun* 裙, *sōgishi* 僧支祇 and *kesa* 袈裟; e.g Yungang Cave no. 20 central image 雲岡石窟第 20 窟本尊 C) *kun*, *kansan* (covering left shoulder), and *kesa*; e.g. Longmen Guyang cave seated Shaka 龍門古陽洞慧成龕釈迦像 D) *kun*, *kansan* (covering left shoulder), *sōgishi* and *kesa*; e.g Longmen Binyang central cave (Northern Wei) seated Buddha 龍門賓陽中洞(北魏)本尊 **[fig. D]**. [110]

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[107] *Kun* is also referred to as *mo* 裳 (skirt-like garment worn from the waist-down).

[108] Yoshimura Rei 吉村怜, "Kodai bikuzō no chakui to meishō – 'sōgishi', 'kansan', 'henzan', 'jikitotsu' ni tsuite," *Museum* 587 (2003): 24, footnote no. 52. Yoshimura says the rare examples are the small gilt bronze Buddha image from the Forty-eight Buddhist Deities Collection, no. 152 and the Hōrinji seated Yakushi image.

[109] Ibid., pp. 5-24.

[110] Ibid., p. 18. Yoshimura uses the example of the Tōshōdaiji seated Ganjin portrait as an example of *kun*, *henzan* and *kesa* combination, confirmed by written sources (p.12). In regard to the Longmen Binyang Cave central seated Buddha image, in his earlier article from 2002, Yoshimura disagreed with Kuno's definition of the *sōgishi*, which he argued was the *henzan*, and what Kuno called the *henzan* was in fact the *sōgishi*. Yoshimura's reasoning was that the *sōgishi* was not an undergarment while the *henzan* was, and that when the *henzan* and *sōgishi* were both worn, the *henzan* came first. The proper order of the Buddha's clothing according to Yoshimura was a *sōgishi*, *henzan* and *kesa* (from inner clothing to outer). See Yoshimura Rei, "Butsuzō no chakui, sōgishi to henzan ni tsuite," *Nanto bukkyō* 81 (2002):

Often mistaken for *sōgishi* (and vice versa), *henzan* and *kansan* were both undergarments. The *sōgishi* was a long rectangular piece of fabric that were originally worn by monks to cover their bare shoulders and it was worn both in the *tsūken* 通肩 mode (covering both shoulders) and *hentan uken* 偏袒右肩 (covering the left shoulder, exposing the right). Since the *henzan* was a kind of shirt, it always had sleeves, though there were slight variations in the sleeve details (either both sleeves were long, or one of the sleeves was short and the other long) **[fig. C]**.[111] *Kansan*, was also an undergarment worn by monks to absorb perspiration. But unlike the *sōgishi* which was a rectangular piece of cloth, the *kansan* was actually a vest and came in three types (covering both shoulders, covering the right shoulder only, and covering the left shoulder) **[fig. B]**.[112]

The *ōhi* 横被, to make matters more complicated, was neither the *henzan*, *kansan* nor *sōgishi*. It was also a long, rectangular piece of cloth which was usually shorter than the *sōgishi* and worn by Shingon and Tendai priests as part of their formal ceremonial attire.[113] An example of an extant ninth century *ōhi* is owned by Tōji, as part of the *Gendakokushi kesa* 犍

93-94, 101 and 106. In his most recent article from 2003, he further commented that the *henzan* worn by the Longmen Binyang Cave central seated Buddha image was more specifically a *utansan* 右袒衫 (*kansan* with right shoulder exposed), worn directly on the skin, followed by the *sōgishi* on top of the *kansan*. Yoshimura, "Sōgishi, kansan, henzan, jikitotsu," pp. 19-20.

[111] For diagrams of *henzan* types, see Yoshimura Rei, "Butsuzō no chakui," p. 107.

[112] For diagrams of the three *kansan* types, see Yoshimura, "Sōgishi, kansan, henzan, jikitotsu," p. 9.

[113] Yoshimura, "Sōgishi, kansan, henzan, jikitotsu," p. 23, footnote no. 20. Izutsu Gafū 井筒雅風, *Hōeshi* (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1974), colorplate 60.

陀穀子袈裟 robe, which the esoteric master Huiguo 恵果 presented to Kūkai when he visited Tang China.[114]

As Asai has pointed out, *ōhi* can be found on the standing Jizō image on a Dunhuang banner, now owned by the Tokyo National Museum.[115] A thin, sash-like piece of fabric hangs over the Jizō's right arm and snakes down on the side. Asai also identifies the long piece of fabric that hangs over the right shoulder and down along the right arm of the Sanbonmatsu Nakamuraku 三本松中村区 standing Jizō bosatsu image [116] as another rare example of *ōhi,* and Nagaoka Ryūsaku considers both the Kōonji 孝恩寺 standing Yakushi and the Tōji (Kyōōgokokuji 教王護国寺) seated Hachiman images as wearing *ōhi,* in addition to the Sanbonmatsu Jizō [117] One particularly noteworthy point about the depiction of *ōhi* on the Jingoji Yakushi is that, as Izutsu Gafū has observed, the *ōhi* was introduced to Japan by the Shingon and Tendai sects in the early Heian period, to be worn with a *shichijō kesa* 七条袈裟 during official events.[118] Izutsu does not think that they were ever worn by monks prior to the Heian period.[119] Thus, the representation of Jingoji Yakushi with the *ōhi* further

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[114] Yoshimura, "Sōgishi, kansan, henzan, jikitotsu," p. 11, fig. 11.

[115] Asai,"Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte III," 5. For a better image, consult Matsushima Ken 松島健, *Jizō bosatsuzō, NB* 239 (1986), 19, fig. 22.

[116] For an excellent side view showing the *ōhi* on the Nakamuraku Jizō, consult Domon Ken, *Nihon no chōkoku 2,* plate 111, 112.

[117] Image of the Nakamuraku Jizō bosatsu taken from Matsushima, fig. 7, Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," p. 12.

[118] *Shichijōgesa* is a kind of outer robe worn by Buddhist monks over a ceremonial robe.

[119] Izutsu, *Hōeshi,* p. 93.

strengthens the theory that it was made for the Heian period temple Takaosanji (established around 801), rather than Jinganji, believed to have been built earlier (ca. 782-793). Moreover, since the *ōhi* was worn as part of formal ceremonial attire, it is reasonable to assume that originally, the image was conceived to be part of a specific ritual performance.

Another iconographical clue that reveals Jingoji's special meaning is the particular stance of the image: the left shoulder is raised slightly higher than the right, and the drapery folds on the left side of the body are placed a little higher than those on the right, suggesting that the image is turning to the left.[120] Nagaoka has noted that the Yakushi's standing pose was religiously significant because it embodied the idea of a tathāgata who was actively performing ascetic practices and "making an appearance," in contrast to the seated Yakushi, which symbolized the Buddha residing in his Pure Land, giving a sermon.[121] The significance of this standing posture becomes quite evident when we consider the image's ritual role in more detail in the next section. For now, we can say that the Jingoji Yakushi formal ceremonial attire and his standing pose showed an "active" Buddha created to perform in a specific ritual setting.

B. Social and Political Background

As mentioned earlier, the Yakushi's powerful and striking form has influenced scholars such as Nakano Genzō to consider specific historical and social circumstances, i.e.,

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[120] Penelope Mason, *History of Japanese Art,* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1993), 109.

[121] Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," p. 7.

that Wake no Kiyomaro's fear of Dōkyō' angry spirit brought about the creation of the Jingoji Yakushi, and that this was partially evident by the fearsome and determined expression conveyed by the image.[122] Moreover, this theory was based on the premise that the extant Yakushi was originally the *honzon* for Jinganji, the private temple built by Wake no Kiyomaro. Though I do not believe that the Jingoji Yakushi was originally made for Jinganji in response to the fear of Dōkyō's vengeful spirit, I think there is some truth in the idea that the Yakushi's extremely severe countenance was consciously designed to counter vengeful spirits. This section will provide a close examination some of the historical, social and political circumstances in order to shed further light on this hypothesis.

Onryō Theory

Scholars have described the Jingoji Yakushi's severe facial features as being an expression of the tense political and social climate. In particular, they have attributed this to the general fear of *onryō* 怨霊 (angry spirits) and *enmi* (厭魅 sorcery) prevalent in late Nara and early Heian times.[123]

The adoption of esoteric rituals created a market in which ritual specialists could be employed to counter these dangerous forces. Moreover, the invention of fearsome esoteric

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[122] Nakano Genzō, "Mokuzō hashō no haikei," p. 24; Asai argued that the Yakushi was created as an icon to ward off Dōkyō's *onryō* and functioned as an centerpiece of a *danpō* 檀法(esoteric altar ritual), with the aid of the Fujiwara Northern family. See Asai, "Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte, IV," pp. 23-28.

[123] Asai, "Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte IV," p. 28. Nakano, "Mokuzō hashō no haikei," p. 25.

deities (Myōō 明王, etc.) promoted the idea that such dangerous forces truly existed and needed to be expunged by means of esoteric ceremonies. According to Paul Groner, Buddhist priests first introduced ceremonies centered on fierce esoteric deities such as Fudō myōō 不動明王 and Daigensui myōō 太元師明王 that enabled a person to defeat their rivals. In the late tenth century, nobles subsequently came to increasingly believe that vengeful spirits had the ability to strike enemies and protect allies.[124] However, in the ninth century, these esoteric rituals were not yet fully integrated into society, and the potent powers of esoteric deities were not yet well-known so people relied on Yakushi for his apotropaic and soteriological powers. This explains why so many of the extant Yakushi images are from the first half of the early Heian period, rather than the latter half, when people came to favor esoteric deities over Yakushi for expelling evil.

The idea that Yakushi can be called upon to expunge negative supernatural forces is clearly explained in the scriptures. The *Yakushi kyō* states:

> If there is a person who suddenly has nightmares, who sees all sorts of evil apparitions, or if a hundred ominous portents materialize in his home – if that person uses all sorts of marvelous and valuable utensils to perform reverent *pūjā* to that Lord Master of Healing, the Lapis Lazuli Radiance Tathāgata, then the nightmares, evil apparitions, and all inauspicious things will disappear, unable to cause harm.[125]

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[124] Paul Groner, *Ryōgen and Mt. Hiei: Japanese Tendai in the Tenth Century* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 88.

[125] Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha,* p. 162.

Evil apparitions were interpreted as *onryō* in Japan. The idea of *onryō* causing havoc to people's lives is already observable in the eighth and ninth centuries. One such infamous *onryō* plaguing the country in the eighth century was the angry spirit of Fujiwara no Hirotsugu 藤原広嗣 (date of birth unknown), executed in 740 after losing a political battle against Kibi no Makibi 吉備真備 (695? - 775) and the Buddhist priest Gembō 玄昉 (d. 746). Hirotsugu mobilized troops in Dazaifu to start a rebellion but he was eventually overtaken by government troops. A *Shoku Nihongi* entry from Tenpyō 18 (746-6-18) notes that people believed Fujiwara no Hirotsugu's spirit caused Genbō's death.[126] Hirotsugu's *onryō* was also blamed for various natural disasters that occurred in the mid 740's, an important factor which convinced Shōmu tennō to move back to the Heijō capital from his Shigaraki palace in Ōmi. Furthermore, the edict issued by Shōmu soon after Hirotsugu's rebellion of 740 proclaimed that every province was to build a monastery and nunnery (*kokubunji niji*) where Buddhist ceremonies were to be held on a regular basis to pray for the welfare of the country. The religious (and psychological) motivation behind this edict thus embodied the fear of *onryō* causing calamitous events.[127]

Nihon ryōiki recounts a tale of Prince Nagaya 長屋王 (684-729), who was accused of plotting a rebellion against Shōmu. According to this story, Shōmu had the Prince killed, cremated, and his ashes thrown into a river. Nagaya's cremated bones eventually washed up in distant Tosa province and the local people, convinced that a recent outbreak of disease

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[126] Tenpyō 18 (746-6-18) entry, "世相傳云。爲藤原廣嗣靈所害" in *Shoku Nihongi*, *SNKBT*, vol. 3, pp. 29-30.

[127] Asai, "Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte IV," p. 25.

was caused by the prince's vengeful spirit, appealed to the court for help.[128] While *Nihon ryōiki* recounts a folktale rather than historical fact, this story nevertheless illustrates the people's world-view at the time: that vengeful spirits could cause the spread of disease and such events were something to complain about to the authorities.

The belief in *onryō* became a convenient outlet for the common people to express criticism toward their government, and was understood as a cause for political and social ills.[129] A very telling example of this can be found in a *Shoku Nihongi* entry from Tenpyō Hōji 1 (757-7-8): "the common folk spread unfounded rumors under the pretext of deceased spirits and caused disorder in the villages."[130]

At the time of Takaosanji's founding in the late 790s, there were other angry spirits around, causing havoc. One notorious spirit was that of Prince Sawara 早良親王, Kōnin tennō's second son and Kanmu's brother, who was the cause of great dismay for Kanmu.[131] Prince Sawara was accused of plotting the assassination of Fujiwara no Tanetsugu 藤原種継 (737-790), Kanmu's chief adviser. After Tanetsugu was assassinated in Nagaoka, Prince Sawara was implicated and shortly after exiled to Awaji 淡路 (785), starving himself to death

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[128] *Nihon ryōiki* [fascicle II, chapter 1], 107-109, Nakamura trans., *Miraculous Stories,* pp. 158-160.

[129] See Higo Kazuo's study on *onryō.* Higo tied the people's belief of *onryō* to social factors, arguing that it was a reflection of their complaints towards the government. Higo Kazuo 肥後和男, "Heian jidai ni okeru onryō no shisō," in Shibata Minoru 柴田實 ed. *Goryō shinkō* (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1984), 13-36; Saeki Arikiyo, *Nihon kodai no seiji to shakai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1970), 250 n. 264, 252.

[130] *Shoku Nihongi* (757-7-8): "民間或有假託亡魂。浮言紛紜。擾乱邑者" *Shoku Nihongi, SNKBT,* vol. 3, pp. 212-213.

[131] Saeki, *Nihon kodai no seiji,* pp. 216-217.

on his way there to protest his innocence. Following Prince Sawara's death, Nagaoka was plagued by famine, devastating floods, and epidemics. To make matters worse, Kanmu's family members, beginning with his junior consort Fujiwara no Tabiko 藤原旅子 (d. 788), his mother Takano no Niigasa 高野新笠(d.789), and his principal consort Fujiwara no Otomuro 藤原乙牟漏 (d.790) died one after the other, while his son Prince Ate was very ill for about three years (between 790-793). These unfortunate events were believed to be caused by Prince Sawara's *onryō*.

Overwhelmed by this seemingly endless series of tragic events, on Enryaku 16 (797-5-20), Kanmu sent two Buddhist priests to Awaji to perform a sutra reading repentance rite (*tenkyō keka* 転経悔過), to offer apologies to the prince. This did not seem to be particularly successful for curing Prince Ate's illness, for in Enryaku 18 (799-2-15), Kanmu ordered offerings to be sent to Awaji.[132] Finally, in Enryaku 19 (800-7-22), he decided to grant Sawara the posthumous title of Sudō tennō 崇道天皇 and Princess Inoe (Inoe no Naishinnō 井上内親王) the title of royal consort (*kōgō* 皇后).[133] In Enryaku 24 (805-1-14) a temple was built in

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[132] Nakai Shinkō 中井真孝, "Goryōe to matsuri," in *Chingo kokka to jujutsu* (Tokyo: Shūeisha, 1989), 162-163.

[133] Princess Inoe (717-775), along with her son Prince Osabe 他戸親王 (761-775), Kanmu's stepbrother, were accused of plotting against her husband (Kōnin tennō) and she was imprisoned with her son Prince Osabe in Hōki 3 (772). Both died in prison, three years later. It was under such tragic circumstances that Prince Yamabe 山部王 became Crown Prince and eventually Kanmu tennō. Enryaku 19 (800-7) entry, *Ruijū kokushi* [fascicle 25], in *KT* 5, p. 155.

Awaji 淡路 in Sudō tennō's honor, in order to pacify his restless spirit.[134] On the sixth day of the second month (805-2-6), Kanmu ordered one hundred and fifty Buddhist priests to recite the *Dai hannya* sutra in the palace and Shungūbō 春宮坊 and make a small granary at Reianji 靈安寺 where thirty sheaves of rice were offered, as well as one hundred fifty *ton* 屯 of tribute cloth (*chōfu* 調綿) and one hundred fifty *ton* of commuted tax cloth (*yōfu* 庸綿) to appease the wrathful spirit [of the Prince].[135]

This clearly illustrates the fear of *onryō* and the strategies for dealing with strange and adverse circumstances, believed to be caused by vindictive spirits.[136] Buddhist images, coupled with ritual, served both apotropaic and soteriological functions to counter these supernatural forces. It was under such inauspicious conditions that the transfer of the capital from Nagaoka to Heian took place, and some scholars have attributed Kanmu's fear of *onryō* as a major motivating factor for this transfer.[137] By the mid ninth century, official spirit

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[134] *Ruijū kokushi* [fascicle 34], in *KT* 5, p. 219. For *chōfu* 調綿 and *yōfu* 庸綿, see Felicia Bock, *Engi Shiki: Procedures of the Engi Era* [Books I-V] (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1970), 64-65 fns.187 and 193.

[135] Ibid., p. 219.

[136] Saeki, *Nihon kodai no seiji*, p. 218.

[137] Ibid., pp. 215-224; Kawakami Tasuke, *Heianchōshi* (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1982); Seki Akira 関晃, "Heian hensen to tōhoku keiryaku," in *Zusetsu nihon bunkashi taikei*, vol. 4 (Heian period)(Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1956-58), 44-59. Obviously, there are other theories posed by scholars on the reasons behind Kanmu's transfer of the capital from Nagaoka to Heian. The most prevalent theory, which is not as widely accepted these days, is the idea that Kanmu wanted to remove his seat of power from the negative influences of the Nara Buddhist ecclesiastics (Tsuji Zennosuke, *Nihon bukkyoshi,* jōsei-hen, p.235). Another theory views the rich water basin in the Yamashiro province where the Heian capital was located, as having been a much more conveniently located area for water and land transportation than the Nara basin. From a political perspective, it was Kanmu's desire to move the capital from Nara,

pacification rites known as *goryōe* 御霊会 were sponsored by the government, and these ceremonies converted *onryō* into *goryō* 御霊 "august spirits."[138] Thus, I believe that it was not just the fear of one specific vengeful spirit, (i.e. Wake no Kiyomaro's fear of Dōkyō) but a general concern for *onryō* that led to the creation of the Yakushi at Takaosanji, at the beginning of the ninth century. The Jingoji Yakushi is truly a work of the highest craftsmanship, for the sculptor was able to successfully express the fiercest aspect of this normally benevolent deity.

Policies against sorcery

Angry spirits were not the only things that posed a serious threat and caused chaos in early Heian society. Sorcery (*enmi* 壓魅) used by people to eliminate their rivals had become a frequently practiced activity, and a serious problem for the ruling class, particularly because from around the late eighth century, intense rivalry between political factions (mainly Fujiwara and anti-Fujiwara groups) gave rise to many intrigues and conspiracies. An

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which had been the power base for the Tenmu-patrilineal line, to Heian, the focus of the Tenji line's ritual base, as well as to be near the power base of Kanmu's maternal relatives. See Ronald P. Toby, "Why Leave Nara? Kammu and the Transfer of the Capital," *MN* 40 no.3 (1985): 343.

[138] The first record of *goryō* and *goryōe* appears in the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* entry from Jōgan 5 (863-5-20) where the *goryōe* was held at Shinsen'en because an epidemic had struck the country causing many deaths. Kuroda Toshio states that *goryō* were deified spirits, and were somewhat abstract entities while *onryō* were individualistic and had human-like qualities. The *goryōe* performed in Jōgan 5 were dedicated to six spirits; that of Sudō tennō, Prince Iyo, Fujiwara no Yoshiko, Fujiwara no Nakanari, Tachibana no Hayanari, and Fun'ya no Miyatamaro, all victims of political intrigues. See Kuroda Toshio, "The World of Spirit Pacification," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, nos. 3-4 (1996) pp., 323-329.

example of sorcery used to eliminate political rivals can be found in the Council of State directive that was passed a month after Prince Sawara's arrest and suicide in 785, prohibiting unordained monks and nuns from accepting offers to chant mystic incantations (*dhāraṇī*) and from performing esoteric rituals for their sponsors, who hoped to cause harm to their enemies.[139] The edict illustrates a case where both officials and the royal subjects used sorcery to plot against and bring down their rivals.[140]

In a 770 entry in *Shoku Nihongi*, the Office of Saṅgha Affairs (*Sōgō* 僧綱) sent the tennō a request to undo a Tenpyō Hōji 8 (746) edict, which strictly prohibited monks in mountain temples from performing sutra-chanting and *keka* rituals, because members of the opposing faction were using them to cast curses on their rivals at court. This 746 edict was issued shortly after Fujiwara no Nakamaro's unsuccessful coup d'etat against Kōken tennō's regime.[141] In yet another edict passed in Hōki 11 (780-12-14) the State prohibited "ignorant" commoners from mingling with male and female diviners who engaged in "indecent forms of worship," (i.e. sorcery and fortune-telling, *enmi*), including selling straw dogs and other charms, which were outlawed. The Council of the State complained that the streets were

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[139] *Ruijū sandai kyaku* [fascicle 2], directive of the Council of State dated 901-2-14, citing an earlier directive from Enryaku 4 (785-10-5). *KT* 25, p.74. "《三》勅。内外文武百官及天下百姓。有學習異端蓄積幻術。壓魅咒咀害傷百物者。首斬從流."

[140] Saeki, *Nihon kodai no seiji,* pp. 154-155.

[141] Furue Ryōji 古江亮仁, "Nara jidai ni okeru sanji no kenkyū," *Kamigami to Nara bukkyō* (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1995): 215; *Shoku Nihongi*, Hōki 1 (770-10-28) *SNKBT,* vol. 4, pp. 320-321 : "丙辰。《廿八》僧綱言。奉去天平寶字八年勅。逆黨之徒。於山林寺院。私聚一僧已上。讀經悔過者。僧綱固加禁制."

filled with such charms and the people repeatedly resorted to these illegal practices and relied on them to obtain good fortune. [142]

These edicts demonstrate that there was a fine line between "ritual" and "sorcery." When there was a privatization of ritual practices and other forms of worship, this was deemed "sorcery," which misled "ignorant" people and created disorder. However, ritual and sorcery were two sides of the same coin; to quote Jonathan Z. Smith, "they were 'situational' or 'relational' categories, mobile boundaries which shift according to the map being employed."[143] When "sorcery" officially sanctioned by the government was involved (as we will see in the next section on Buddhist repentance rituals), it was regarded as a powerful, purifying ritual. In this sense, the line between ritual and sorcery was heavily dependent on whether or not they were "official" or "unofficial," "private" or "public." These edicts proscribing privatization of "unorthodox" ritual activities were often passed soon after a major political intrigue.[144] The court recognized that sorcery and esoteric rituals were extremely effective means for staging a rebellion and went out of their ways to sanction such activities, while at the same time they authorized the same kinds of activities for the purposes of ensuring the prosperity and protection of the state (*chingo kokka*).[145]

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[142] Furue, *Kamigami,* p. 214. *Shoku Nihongi*, Hōki 11 (780-12-14) entry: (比來無知百姓。構合巫覡。妄崇淫祀。蒭狗之設。符書之類。百方作恠。填溢街路。託事求福。還涉厭魅), in *Shoku Nihongi*, *SNKBT*, vol. 5, p. 165.

[143] Jonathan Z. Smith, *Map is not Territory* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 291.

[144] Furue, *Kamigami,* p. 216.

[145] The concept of *chingo kokka* 鎮護国家 appears in Buddhist scriptures such as the *Lotus Sutra*, *Humane Kings Sutra* and *Radiant Light Sutra.* However, according to Cynthia Bogel, the

C. Purification and Yakushi *keka* 悔過 rituals

Eighth century Yakushi *keka* rituals

The instability of political and social situations gave rise to the fear of and belief in *onryō* during the late Nara and early Heian periods which, in turn, impacted new developments in the religious sphere, mainly ritual and ceremonial practices. In this context, *keka* can be viewed as highly strategic forms of cultural practice which reproduces, maintains and reshapes culture and society and is structured on the basis of power relations.[146] These rituals were very widely practiced in the late Nara and early Heian, dedicated to particular deities, such as Yakushi, Kichijōten, Jūichimen Kannon and Amida. Often translated as "Rites of Repentance," the original meaning of *keka* embodied the idea of confessing transgressions from past and present lives to the Buddha to purify and eliminate karmic obstructions, with the hopes of having one's wishes granted.[147]

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actual term *chingo kokka* date to the medieval period. See Cynthia Bogel, "Ritual and Representation," p. 174, fn.1. Allan Grapard explains that the term *kokka* referred to the imperial lineage and supporting houses (*ka*) which governed the realm of the country (*koku*) as well as embodying the large meaning of the imperial state. He states, "as such, the phrase *chingo kokka* refers to a government ideology legitimated by rituals performed by both sacerdotal lineages in specific shrines and Buddhist lineages in specific temples, in the name of the imperial lineage and its satellite households." Allan G. Grapard, "The Economics of Ritual Power," in *Shinto in History: Ways of the Kami*, John Breen and Mark Teeuwen eds. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 78.

146 Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992): 220.

147 For a detailed discussion on the origin of *keka*, see Cynthia Bogel, "Ritual and Representation in Eighth-Century Japanese Esoteric Buddhist Sculpture," (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1995): 165-167. See also Visser, vol. 1, pp. 249-409.

The earliest known example of *keka* appears in *Nihon shoki* (642-7-25): "In the temples the Mahāyāna Sutras ought to be read by means of *tendoku*[148] and our transgressions should be repented as instructed by the Buddhas, and thus with respect one should pray for rain." 可於寺寺轉讀大乘經典悔過如佛所說。敬而祈雨.[149] *Keka* was popular not just with royal members of the court but was also practiced by government officials and even commoners.[150] For example, *Nihon ryōiki* gives an example of a certain Lord Kura no iegimi from the central village of Yamamura in Yamato province, who wanted to expiate his transgressions. He ordered his servant to go and find him a monk who could recite Mahayana sutras to him.[151]

In the Nara period *keka* developed into more elaborate Buddhist services (*hōe* 法会), often conducted in the royal palace compounds and prominent monasteries, to pray for the health and longevity of the tennō and his family. While many different types of *keka* were practiced in the seventh and eighth centuries, the performance of *keka* dedicated to the deity Yakushi was increasingly popular from the late eighth to the first half of the ninth century.[152]

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[148] *Tendoku* is literally to read some lines at the beginning, middle and end of each sutra. Visser, vol. 1, p. 9.

[149] Sato Michiko 佐藤道子, "Keka hōyō no keishiki seiritsu to tenkai: sono ichi," *Geinō no kagaku* 18, (1990): 141. See also *Nihon shoki* [Book 24, Kōgyoku tennō] in *NKBT*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1971), 240-241.

[150] Yamagishi Tsuneto 山岸常人,"Tōdaiji Nigatsudō no sōken to shibi chūdai Jūichimen kekasho," *Nanto bukkyō* 45 (1980): 3.

[151] *Nihon ryōiki* fascicle 1, chapter 10, pp. 53-55.For an English version, see Kyoko Motomochi Nakamura, *Miraculous Stories,* pp. 120-121.

[152] Yamagishi Tsuneto, "Keka kara shushō, shunie e," *Nanto bukkyō* 52 (1984): 36.

These rituals as well as the creation and installation of Yakushi images in government-sanctioned temples became a corollary of *onryō* belief.[153] For example, the first record of *Yakushi keka* appears in *Shoku Nihongi* as taking place in Tenpyō 16 (744-12-4) when Shōmu ordered *Yakushi keka* to be performed for seven days throughout the provinces.[154] Moreover, the references to a *Yakushi kekasho* 薬師悔過所 in *Zō Tōdaijishi kokusakuge* 造東大寺司告朔解 indicates that *Yakushi keka* were held frequently enough that there were specially designated spaces for their performance.[155]

The practice of *taisha* 大赦 (granting amnesty for criminal acts) was an important component of Nara and Heian period *Yakushi keka*, which peaked during Shōmu's reign and greatly decreased after Kanmu's.[156] The practice of granting amnesty to criminals is outlined in both the *Yakushi kyō* and *Shichibutsu Yakushi kyō*, "…there should arise in that properly enthroned *kṣatriya* king the thought of compassion and pity towards all sentient things. He should pardon all who are incarcerated," though the idea is not exclusive to these two

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153 Asai,"Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte IV," p. 26.

154 Tenpyō 16 (744-12-4) entry: "令天下諸国薬師悔過七日." See: *Shoku Nihongi*, *SNKBT*, vol. 2, pp. 448-449; Bogel, "Ritual and Representation," p. 290 for a summary of these events in English.

155 Satō, "Keka hōyō," pp. 139-193.

156 Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō*, 31.

scriptures.[157] Likewise, the *Shichibutsu Yakushi kyō* says, "With great mercy, he should pardon and release from their gloomy difficulties all those distressed beings [in prisons]".[158]

The granting of amnesty to criminals can be found frequently in the activities of Kōken tennō, Shōmu's daughter and a devout Buddhist who particularly favored the Medicine Buddha. In Tenpyō 19 (750-1-1) shortly after Shōmu took the tonsure, Kōken issued a proclamation stating that she took refuge in the Yakushi sutra. Wishing to purify the people, she pardoned criminals throughout the country.[159]

The releasing of living creatures was also related to the idea of granting amnesty, and often (but not always) a component of *Yakushi keka.* For example, a *Shoku Nihongi* entry from 745-9-19 notes:

> Various monasteries in the capital and purified sites at celebrated mountains were ordered to perform *Yakushi keka* (penitential rites). Shrine offerings and prayer services were made to Kamo, Matsuo and others of the same rank. The government ordered that falcons and cormorants in all the states to be released and had 3,800 people enter the Buddhist priesthood.[160]

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[157] *Yakushi kyō, T* 14, no. 450, p. 407c, "慈悲心赦諸繫閉" ; for English translation see Birnbaum, p. 166.

[158] Birnbaum p. 205; *Shichibutsu Yakushi kyō, T* 14, no. 451, p. 416a, "爾時當於一切有情起慈悲心大恩赦脱諸幽厄苦惱衆生."

[159] Visser, vol. 1, pp. 298-299; *Shoku Nihongi, SNKBT,* vol. 3, pp. 38-39.

[160] Tenpyō 17 (9-19-745) entry: 又令京師畿内諸寺及諸名山淨處行藥師悔過之法。奉幣祈禱賀茂松尾等神社。令諸國所有鷹鵜並以放去。度三千八百人出家。 *Shoku Nihongi, SNKBT,* vol. 4, pp. 16-17. Yamagishi Tsuneto, "Tōdaiji nigatsudō," p. 8.

This practice of releasing live creatures, known in Japan as *hōjō* 放生 ('liberating life'), is mentioned in both the *Yakushi kyō* and *Shichibutsu Yakushi kyō*, "You should release forty-nine living creates of varied species 應放雜類衆生生至四十九." The sutra further states that by observing these deeds, "the winds and rains will occur at their proper seasons, and the crops will ripen. All sentient beings will be healthy and will be gladdened and joyous."[161] The liberation of both men and creatures promised not only the prosperity of the kingdom, but also emphasized the compassionate nature of the sovereign, which, along with acts of penitence, greatly increased his spiritual merit.

Tenpyō 17 (745) was a year of serious natural disasters such as earthquakes and fires which led to an unstable political situation. Holding Yakushi *keka* to pray for the health of the royal family was of a highly personal nature, but it also encompassed the idea of *chingo kokka* because the heavenly sovereign's body was literally conceived as the "body of the state" (*kokutai* 国体).[162] The Ritsuryō system placed the tennō in the center of the state's welfare and maintained that the well-being of the state rested on his personal conduct and being. This can be observed in the *Shoku Nihongi* entry from Tenpyō Kanpō 1 (the intercalary fifth month of 749).[163] The sovereign's ill health was perceived as resulting from his lack of virtue, thereby causing the heavens to respond with disfavor. Thus, natural

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161 Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha,* p. 166.

162 Allan G. Grapard, "*Religious Practices,"* in *The Cambridge History of Japan: Heian Japan,* vol. 2, Donald H. Shively and William H. McCullough eds., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 529.

163 Tenpyō Shōhō (749-5) entry, *Shoku Nihongi*, *SNKBT*, vol. 3, pp. 80-81.

calamities that affected the country were perceived to have arisen from his lack of merit and the pardoning of crimes, which demonstrated the ruler's "benevolent rule," was granted to deal with the problem.[164]

Yakushi keka in the ninth century

Though records substantiate the importance of Yakushi *keka*, the lack of detailed information in the documents creates a challenge in reconstructing how the Yakushi statues were utilized in *keka* rites. Nevertheless, the high demand for the production of Yakushi images during the ninth century is a clear indication that they were utilized in *keka* rituals, and as I have emphasized earlier, the fear of *onryō* was one significant reason for the performance of *keka*. Nakano states, for example, that according to *Nihon kōki*, in Enryaku 15 (796-10-17) forty Buddhist priests were invited to perform Yakushi *keka* at the palace for seventeen consecutive days. He suggests that this was to pacify the angry spirit of Prince Sawara.[165]

There were further developments in the ritual component of *Yakushi keka* in the ninth century, as it became even more strongly tied to the protection and prosperity of the entire country. Yamagishi Tsuneto has shown in his study of *keka* that these rituals developed into a two-part system where a popular sutra such as *Kongō hannya kyō* 金剛般若経 (Skt. Vajracchedikā sutra) or *Daihannya kyō* 大般若経(Skt. Mahāprājnapāranutā sutra) was

[164] Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō*, p. 32.

[165] Nakano, *Keka no geijutsu*, pp. 121-122. *Nihon kiryaku* [fascicle 5, Kanmu tennō], in *KT* 3, p. 6.

chanted during the day and the *keka* service was performed in front of a Buddhist image during the evening.[166]

Between 830-850, particularly during reigns of Junna and Ninmyō tennō, performances of Yakushi *keka* reached its peak.[167] In fact, there was also a significant shift in the nature of Yakushi *keka* during Ninmyō tennō's reign. As we have seen, during the Nara period, *keka* embodied the notion of praying for the sovereign's well-being which in turn extended to the protection of the entire country. The tennō's illness and other inauspicious events were considered to be heaven's judgment against the tennō's lack of virtue. Yakushi *keka* in the Heian period, particularly during the 830s, came to be viewed as a safeguard against perceived threats of epidemics and strange supernatural occurrences.[168] Less emphasis was placed on the notion that lack of virtue on part of the ruler created "heavenly and earthly discord" and instead, performance of Buddhist rites for the prevention of inauspicious events became a central concern. A royal edict of Jōwa 1 (834-4-6) explicitly states that:

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[166] Yamagishi, "Shushō, shunie e," pp. 27-49

[167] Yamagishi, "Tōdaiji Nigatsudō," p. 35. Heian period official documents, such as the *Sandai jitsuroku*, *Ruijū kokushi*, and the *Ruijū sandaikyaku* clearly record *keka* rituals performed specifically with the chanting of the Yakushi sutra. *Ruijū kokushi* for example, records four instances of Yakushi *keka* performed in 796, 827, 833, and 837. The entry from 833 specifically notes that the Yakushi *keka* was performed due to an outbreak of a severe epidemic. *Ruijū kokushi* [fascicle 178: *Yakushi keka*], *SZKT*, vol. 6, pp. 222-223.

[168] Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō*, p. 4. Nishio notes that prior to 833, the only record of Yakushi worship concerned with suppressing an epidemic is from the *Nihon kirayku*, 823-308 (Kōnin 14) entry that states that there was an order to have 100 monks at Tōdaiji perform the *Yakushihō* 薬師法 ritual in the wish to remove the epidemic (令百僧於東大寺、行薬師法。欲除疫疾也) *Nihon kirayku* 日本記略, *KT* 10, p. 314.

Ascetics and *kokubunji* priests were selected from the Five Home Provinces and Provinces along the Seven Highways to read and recite the *Kongō hannya kyō* and during the day and perform Yakushi *keka* during the night for three days and three nights, to prevent calamities that have not yet occurred. (冝令畿内七道諸國。擇國内行者。於國分寺僧寺三ヶ日内晝則轉金剛般若。夜則修薬師悔過。迄于事畢).[169]

Similarly, another royal edict from Jōwa 4 (837-6-21) states:

Decree: We hear that there was an outbreak of an epidemic and many people are suffering. There is nothing as great as the power of the *Hannya* [*prajna*] to quell the calamity before it occurs. Thus I order the dispatching of 10 to 20 ascetic practitioners from the Five Home Provinces and the Provinces along the Seven Highways to the *kokubunji*. Within three days they should read and recite the *Kongō hannya kyō* during the day and perform Yakushi *keka* at night. (勅。如聞。疫癘間發。疾苦者衆。未銷殃未然不如般若之力。冝令畿内七道諸國内行者。廿口已下十口已上。於國分僧寺始自七月八日。三箇日。晝轉金剛般若。夜修薬師悔過。迄于事竟).[170]

In this edict, the power of the *Kongō hannya* sutra for preventing and quelling epidemics is well illustrated. Also noteworthy is that ascetics (*gyōja*) from the Five Home Provinces and Provinces along the Seven Highways were ordered to perform the rituals at *kokubunji*. *Gyōja* frequently trained by undergoing austere practices in the mountains, and it appears that their powers for preventing or quelling inauspicious events were highly regarded.[171]

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[169] *Shoku Nihon kōki* 続日本後記 [fascicle 3], in *KT* 3, p. 26.

[170] Ibid., p. 67.

[171] Gorai, *Yakushi shinkō*, p. 19.

Similarly, in Jōwa 7 (840-6-13), due to a severe famine that broke out on account of a bad harvest from the previous year, Ninmyō ordered the recitation of *Daihannya kyō* during the day and Yakushi *keka* at night for seven days in the Five Home Provinces and also the killing of living things was prohibited. On the next day the same rituals were performed in the Fifteen Great Temples of Nara and Kyoto.[172] In Jōwa 9 (842-3-15), because the land suffered from drought, Ninmyō ordered the *Kongō hannya kyō* to be read during the day and Yakushi *keka* to be practiced at night by twenty priests in all the *kokubunji* throughout the country.[173]

Jingoji and Yakushi keka

After receiving *jōgakuji* status in 824 and thereby becoming a government-sanctioned temple, Jingoji became an important site for *keka.* Its Yakushi was the focal point for these rituals which is why it is an ideal case-study for exploring the relationship between Yakushi images and *keka.*[174] After 824, the temple's primary reasons for performing *keka* was to

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[172] *Shoku Nihon kōki* [fascicle 9], *KT* 3, p. 105. See also Visser, vol. 1, pp. 19-20.

[173] *Shoku Nihon kōki* [fascicle 11], *KT* 3, p. 130. See also Visser, vol. 1, p. 21.

[174] Nakano Genzō (1982, 1997); Nagasaka Ichirō (1992); Nagaoka Ryūsaku (1994, 1999). These articles all discuss the Jingoji Yakushi in relation to *keka* rituals, but each focuses on slightly difference aspects. Nagasaka argued from the perspective that Jingoji was a kind of shrine-temple complex, a *jingūji*, and that the *Yakushi keka* rituals were held as part of facilitating the process of *shinbutsu shūgō,* which he defines as a politico-religious strategy of the state to bring local cults under the organized system of State Buddhism; Nagasaka, "Shoki jingūji no seiritsu," p. 71. Nakano argued for the central role played by the Jingoji Yakushi in *keka* rituals, contending that the image was used in the rituals not only to pray for the health and longevity of the sovereign and his consorts, but also to pacify angry spirits believed to be the cause for the indispositions. "Mokuchō hashō no haikei," pp. 23-25.

protect and guard the capital's borders and to pray for bountiful harvest.[175] This is mentioned in the *Ruiju kokushi* passage on Jingoji:

> In addition, twenty-seven newly ordained monks of rectitude will be appointed to recite the *Sutra of Humane Kings* to protect the kingdom's borders, as well as for the regulation of the winds and rain and to pray for the ripening of the five crops.[176] These sutras will be recited in turn during the day and night without interruption.[177]

The performance of *Yakushi keka* at Jingoji, to pray for border protection and bountiful harvest can also be observed from an edict promulgated in Jōwa 4 (837-4-25).[178] On this day, Ninmyō tennō ordered sutra-chanting rituals (reading the *Dai hannya kyō* during the day, and reciting Yakushi's name (*hōgō* 宝号) at night for three days and nights) to be practiced at twenty prominent state-sponsored temples in the Five Main Provinces, including Jingoji and Enryakuji.[179] The twenty chosen temples were from Heiankyō as well as the

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Nagaoka examined the Jingoji Yakushi's function in *keka* rituals performed between ca 800-840 and maintained that the Yakushi *keka* performed at Jingoji were primarily for the prevention of calamities and to pray for the abundance of crops, Nagaoka, "Jingoji Yakushi," pp. 1-27.

[175] Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," p. 13.

[176] Ripening of the five crops 天下五穀: wheat, *awa* millet, beans, rice, *kibi* millet.

[177] *Ruijū kokushi* [fascicle 180], in *KT* 6, pp. 259-260.

[178] Nagaoka, "Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō," p. 13; *Shoku Nihon kōki*, in *KT* 3, p. 66.

[179] *Shoku Nihon kōki* notes that twenty temples within the 5 Main Provinces were ordered to perform Yakushi *keka*. These temples were: Bonshakuji 梵釈寺, Sūfuku 崇福寺, Tōji, Saiji, Tōdaiji, Kōfukuji 興福寺, ShinYakushiji, Gangōji 元興寺, Daianji 大安寺 Yakushiji, Saidaiji 西大寺, Tōshōdaiji, Moto Gangōji 本元興寺, Gufuku 弘福寺, Hōryūji, Shitennōji 四天王寺, Enryakuji 延暦寺, Jingoji 神護寺, Shojinji 聖神寺, and Jōjūji 常住寺.

former capitals at Asuka, Fujiwara, Naniwa, Ōtsu, and Heijō, and they included both city and mountain temples that enshrined Yakushi as their main deity.

This entry correlates closely with the *Ruiju kokushi* passage on Jingoji in demonstrating the temple's primary role for ensuring *chingo kokka.* According to Nagaoka, Jingoji also became known as part of the *Shichikōzan* 七高山 (The Seven Sacred Lofty Mountains) consisting of Mt. Atago 愛宕山, Mt. Hiei 比叡山, Mt. Hira 比良山, Mt. Ibuki 伊吹山, Mt. Kabu 神峯山, Mt. Kinpu 金峰山, and Mt. Katsuragi 葛木山) and these mountains were situated close to the provincial borders surrounding the capital; for example, Mt. Hiei and Hira were situated between the borders of Yamashiro and Ōmi, Mt. Ibuki between Ōmi and Mino, Mt. Kabu between Yamashiro and Setsu, and Mt. Atago between Yamashiro and Tamba, Mt. Katsuragi between Yamato and Kawachi.[180] The seven temples were all located in areas surrounding the capital, and *keka* services in these mountains were considered to be particularly efficacious for protecting the capital's boundaries from epidemics and ensuring the abundance of the five crops in the provinces.[181]

References to *Shichikōzan* appears in *Kuchizusami* 口遊 (written by Minamoto Tamenori 源為憲 in 970).[182] Tamenori writes that the mountains of Hiei, Hira, Ibuki, Kabu, Atago, Kinpu, Katsuragi together came to be known as the *Shichikōzan* after a royal edict was passed in Jōwa 3 (836 -3-10) requiring Yakushi *keka* to be held in these mountains.

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180 Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," pp. 16. For a map of the Seven Sacred Mountains, see pp. 2-3.

181 Nagaoka, "Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō," p. 15.

182 Nagaoka, "Sanji no reizō," 16-17; *Kuchizusami chūkai,* Yōgaku no Kai ed., (Tokyo: Benseisha, 1997), p. 2.

Furthermore, the *Shakke kanpanki* 釋家官班記 (written by Prince Son'en in 1335) mentions a royal edict that proclaimed that Yakushi *keka* were to be held for 49 days in the spring and autumn periods to pray for the abundance of the five crops and these were to be performed by esoteric masters known as *Shichikōzan ajari* 七高山阿闍梨.[183] The presence of *ajari* indicates another prominent feature of Heian *keka*, in that it took on a highly esoteric character. In fact, the renaming of Takaosanji to Jingo Kokuso Shingoji, was not just a matter of receiving state-sponsorship but it signified that the temple's religious affiliation switched to Shingon Buddhism.[184]

As can be seen, in the first half of the ninth century, particularly during the reign of Ninmyō, Yakushi *keka*, in combination with daytime sutra reading, was practiced frequently. This combination was believed to be highly effective for preventing and suppressing catastrophic events. Yakushi *keka* was the preferred method of ritual in dealing with disasters that plagued the country such as famine, drought and epidemics. In conjunction with this, boundary protection and bountiful harvests were also a primary focus of sutra chanting and Yakushi *keka*, in order to ensure the safety and prosperity of the country.

5. Summary

In this chapter, one of the most important standing Yakushi images from the ninth century, the Jingoji Yakushi was discussed. I first outlined the major historiographical debate surrounding this image (whether the image was the principal icon for Jinganji or

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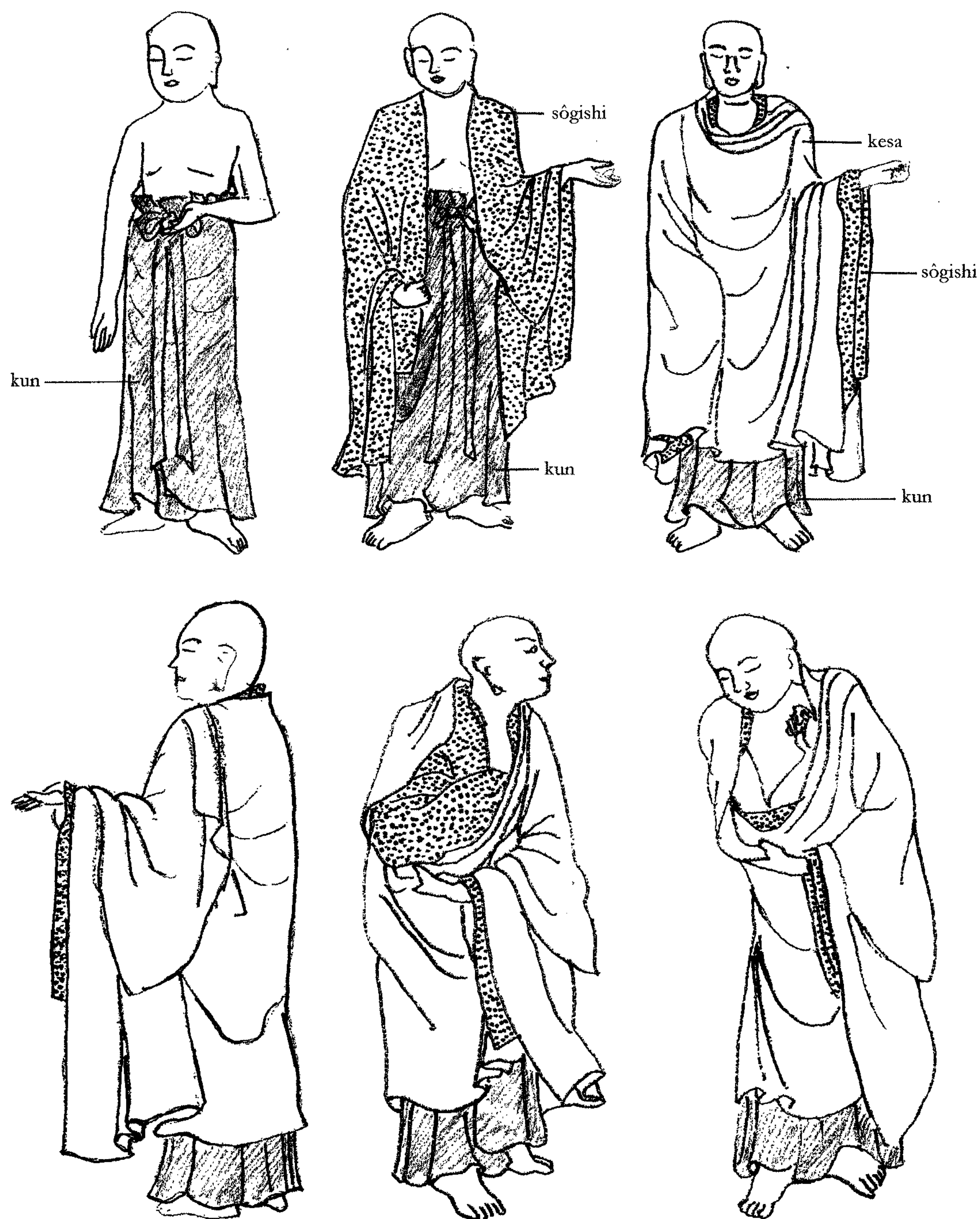
183 *Shakke kanpanki, GR* 24, p. 415.

184 Nakano Tadaaki, "Saisetsu Jingoji Yakushizō no denrai to seisaku nendai (jō)." *Shiseki to bijutsu* 596 (1989): 255.

Takaosanji/Jingoji) and argued that it was made originally for Takaosanji. This was followed by an exploration of the Yakushi's close association to the Enryakuji Konpon chūdō standing Yakushi, purportedly carved by Saichō. Most importantly, the suggestion was made that both iconographically and ritually, the Jingoji Yakushi may have been of the same lineage as Saichō's Yakushi. Though the hypothetical nature of this interpretation does invite controversy, it is a necessary step if we are to discover the meaning of the icon in its proper context.

Aside from these claims, I tried to show that icons are not static and the meanings ascribed to them change over time. In order to fully understand the Jingoji Yakushi in its ritual context, its prevalent forms of worship during the ninth century were examined. During Saichō's close affiliations with Takaosanji, the Yakushi icon was a site for Lotus Sutra lectures; it then became a locus for *keka* rituals ordered by the central government. These rites specifically focused on the protection of the state and bountiful harvest. During the late eighth and early ninth centuries Yakushi was regarded as a deity not only with healing powers, but also with apotropaic abilities, and the deity's ability to ward off and quell evil spirits, demons, and disease caused by these malicious supernatural forces, reached its full potential.

Fig. A Monastic Garment [185]



[185] Illustration by Yui Suzuki, in reference to Yoshimura Rei, "Butsuzō no chakui," p. 100.

Fig. B Three types of *Kansan* [186]

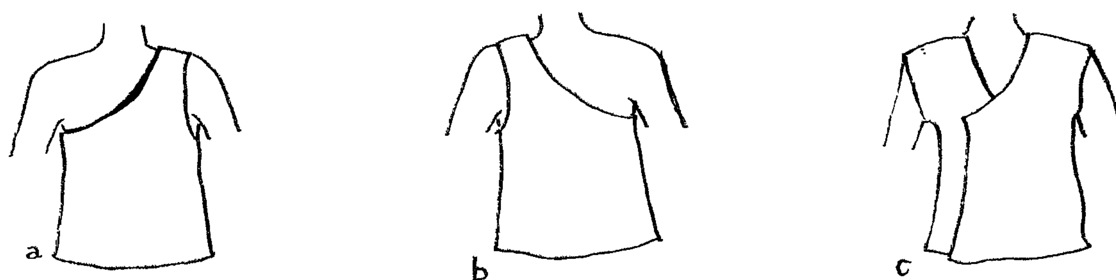
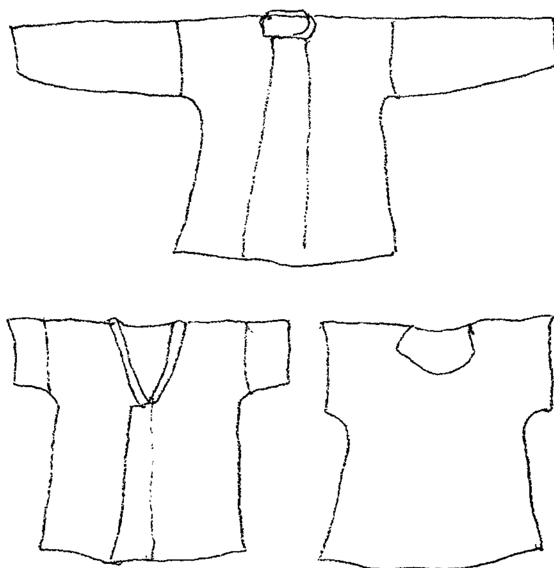


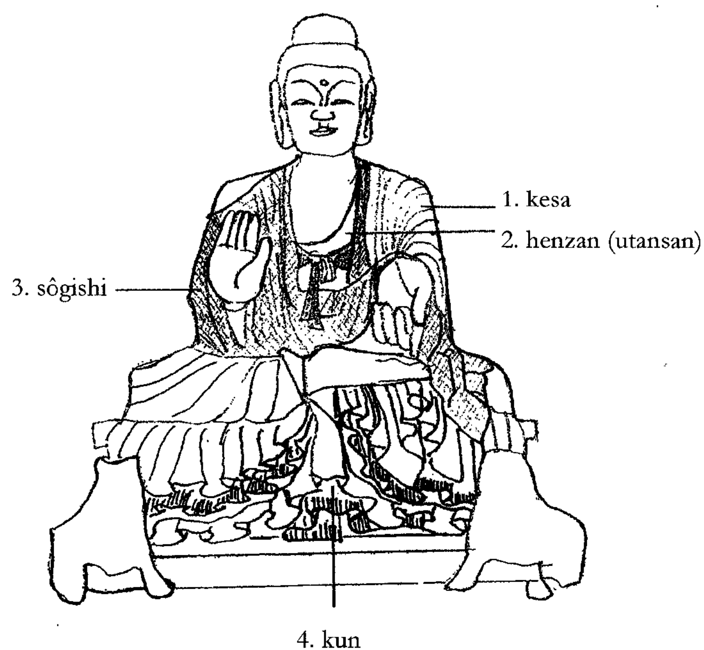
Fig. C Three Types of *Henzan* [187]



[186] Illustration by Yui Suzuki, in reference to Yoshimura Rei, "Kansan, henzan and jikitotsu," pp, 9.

[187] Illustration by Yui Suzuki; in reference to Yoshimura Rei, "Butsuzō no chakui," p. 107.

Fig. D Longmen Binyang Central Cave Seated Buddha [188]



[188] Illustration by Yui Suzuki, in reference to Yoshimura, "Butsuzō no chakui," p. 93.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Seated Shichibutsu Yakushi Icon Type

1. Introduction

Some of the most celebrated examples of early Heian Buddhist sculpture are the seated Yakushi images from Shin Yakushiji 新薬師寺, Kuroishidera 黒石寺 and Shōjiji 勝持寺.[1] These Medicine Buddhas sit in the lotus position and form the "fear-not" mudrā (*semui'in*) with the right hand while the left holds a medicine jar and rests on the knee.[2] In addition to being in seated posture, they all possess mandorlas adorned by small images of six or seven Medicine Buddhas.[3] Nakano Genzō and other Japanese art historians have argued that this particular sculptural form was a visual representation of the Seven Medicine Buddhas (*Shichibutsu Yakushi*). They further proposed that this seated icon type represented an esoteric rendering of the Medicine Buddha popular during the eighth and ninth century.[4]

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[1] Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei,* vol. 1, pl. 602 (Kuroishidera Yakushi), and pl. 523 (Shōjōji image). Consult Nishikawa Shinji, "Yakushi nyorai zazō," in *Yamato koji taikan*, Ōta Hakutarō, et al. eds., vol. 4, *Shinyakushi-ji, Byakugō-ji, Enjō-ji,* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shōten, 1977) for photographs of the Shin Yakushiji image.

[2] There are exceptions to this, where the Yakushi does not hold a medicine jar, as discussed in the first chapter.

[3] Nakano Genzō, *Keka no geijutsu*, p. 77.

[4] Adachi Kō, "Yakushiji Kondo honzon to Shichibutsu Yakushi kōhai" in *Nihon chōkokushi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Ryūkinsha, 1944), 50-59. This is a reprint of his 1937 article and is the earliest article that discusses the early Heian Shichibutsu Yakushi iconography. See also Nakano Genzō, *Keka no geijutsu*, 63-109; Itō, *Yakushi nyoraizō*, 41-42. Itō says that the cult of

This chapter first reexamines and clarifies the interpretations of *Shichibutsu Yakushi* made by other scholars and then discusses a small corpus of Heian Yakushi images that I refer to as the "seated Shichibutsu Yakushi icon type," because all are seated and have mandorlas with six or seven Medicine Buddhas. The discussion of these images examines possible prototypes in considering the development of this icon type. Finally, in the last section, a detailed examination of the Shin Yakushiji Yakushi as a case-study is presented, paying particular attention to this icon since the relevant visual and textual sources are more abundant than those for other seated Yakushi images of the ninth century.

2. An Overview of Past Scholarship

Japanese art historians often refer to a Heian Yakushi image as a *Shichibutsu Yakushi,* generally in terms of the iconographic form of a seated Yakushi with a mandorla bearing six or seven Yakushi *kebutsu* 化仏 (Skt. Nirmāna Buddha)[5] similar to the iconographical

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Shichibutsu Yakushi already existed in the Nara period, giving as examples Yakushiji Yakushi's original mandorla, the imperial edict of Tenpyō 17 (745-9-19, where Shōmu tennō commissioned seven Yakushi images 6 *shaku* 5 sun *tall*), and the making of Shichibutsu Yakushi at Shin Yakushiji. His corpus includes images in Chiba Matsumushidera, Shiga Keisokuji and Shin Yakushiji, Shōjōji, Kuroishidera, and Shōjiji. Cynthia Bogel says that Yijing's translation, *Yakushi rurikō nyorai hongan kudokukyō* 薬師琉璃光七仏本願功徳経 was an esoteric version of the Yakushi sutra, and that this sutra was known in Japan during the mid eighth century. She also notes that from around the mid-eighth century, ceremonies for Yakushi became increasingly esoteric in nature and that the original seven Yakushi made for Shin Yakushiji were esoteric Shichibutsu Yakushi. Cynthia Jean Bogel, "Ritual and Representation in Eighth-Century Japanese Esoteric Buddhist Sculpture," (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1995): 288-293. She also identifies the extant Shin Yakushiji Yakushi as a *Shichibutsu Yakushi*, p. 296.

[5] *Kebutsu* 化仏 means "transformed Buddha," and it refers to the body which a Buddha manifests in order to help sentient beings. See *Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary* (Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1991), 185.

representations of the Seven Buddhas of the Past. The Seven Buddhas of the Past represent all the Buddhas, including the historical Śākyamuni of a mythic lineage who exist outside historical time. Thus, their presence denotes Buddhist teachings as timeless truths and also symbolizes an infinite continuum of Buddhas from the past into the future.[6] However, since the small *kebutsu* all hold medicine jars in their left hand, they are clearly Medicine Buddhas, rather than the Seven Buddhas of the Past.

Adachi Kō argued that the Yakushiji Yakushi was conceived as a Shichibutsu Yakushi, based on an analysis of written accounts describing the original mandorla (the current one is an Edo period restoration), including *Yakushiji engi* 薬師寺縁起 and *Shichidaiji junrei shiki* 七大寺巡礼私記.[7] A passage in *Yakushiji engi,* compiled in Chōwa 4 (1015) describes the icon as being a monumental gilt bronze image sitting on a Mt. Sumeru throne (*shumiza* 須弥座), with seven Yakushi Buddhas carved in relief on the body halo (shinkō 身光

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[6] Donald F. McCallum, "The Buddhist Triad in Three Kingdoms Sculpture," *Korean Culture* vol. 16.4 (1995): 27. See also Alexander Coburn Soper, *Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China* (Ascona, Switerland, Artibus Asiae Publishers, 1959), 198-199.

[7] Adachi, *Nihon chōkokushi,* p. 53. It should be noted here that his central argument is to challenge the Hakuhō dating (ca 680) for the Yakushiji Yakushi and argue for a Tenpyō dating (ca 720). By showing that Yakushiji Yakushi was a visual representation of Shichibutsu Yakushi canonically based on Yijing's text translated in 707, he asserts that this is another strong piece of evidence that discounts the Hakuhō theory and strengthens the Tenpyō theory (Adachi believes that the Yakushiji Yakushi was made between the Yōrō and Jinki eras (717-720), p. 19. He argues that since Yijing's text was not translated until 707, the Shichibutsu Yakushi would not have been visually represented until well after 707 in Japan. Today, there is general consensus that the Yakushiji Yakushi is a Tenpyō period image.

) part of the mandorla, and flying heavenly deities (J. *hiten* 飛天, Skt. *apsarās*) interspersed between the flames bordering the mandorla.[8]

The twelfth century diary *Shichidaiji junrei shiki*, written by the scholar Ōe no Chikamichi 大江親通 (d. 1151) similarly describes the Golden Hall Yakushi as being a monumental gilt bronze image seated on a Mt. Sumeru throne with Shichibutsu Yakushi carved in relief on the mandorla, nineteen heavenly deities framing its outer edges, and a pagoda carved on the topmost part of the flames which had three nine-tiered pillars.[9] Adachi reasoned that since the original mandorla was not destroyed until the Muromachi period, the mandorla that Chikamichi saw in Hōen 6 (1140) was indeed the original one made for the Yakushiji Yakushi. Furthermore, he argued that the Seven Medicine Buddha iconography seen on the mandorla was based on Yijing's *Shichibutsu Yakushikyō*.[10]

The Yakushiji Yakushi mandorla that Chikamichi describes seems to be very similar in characteristics to the Asuka period small, gilt bronze mandorla known as #196 of the

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[8] "其堂中安置丈六金銅須彌座藥師像一軀、円光中半出七佛藥師、火炎間翅〔刻カ〕造無數飛天也" in Fujita, *KBS*, vol. 2, p. 138.

[9] *Shichidaiji junrei shiki* (Diary of My Pilgrimage to the Seven Great Temples), documents Chikamichi's second pilgrimage in 1140 to the seven great temples of Nara. His first pilgrim took place in 1106, and is recorded in his *Shichidaiji nikki* (Diary of the Seven Great Temples). Both diaries are reprinted in Fujita, *KBS*, vol.1, pp. 29-63 and 19-28 respectively (中尊金銅丈六藥師、須彌座，身光刻付半出七佛藥師像、又縁光雕飛天十九体、其須彌旂炎刻寶塔一基、彼塔上在三柱之九輪、尤以奇、子細可尋). This pagoda with three nine-ringed pillars may have been similar to the one represented on the Yumedono Kannon's mandorla as well as the pagoda held in the palm of the Hōryūji Kondō Tamonten. See also Adachi, *Nihon chōkokushi*, pp. 51-52.

[10] Ibid., p. 51.

"Forty-eight Buddhist Deities" collection, originally designed for a Buddha triad.[11] No. 196 has fourteen heavenly maidens that outline the boat-shaped (舟形 *funagata*) mandorla, their robes flowing upward to transform into a pattern resembling dancing flames, which complement the flame pattern on the middle section of the mandorla. At the highest point stands a three-pillared pagoda flanked by two heavenly maidens. On the body halo (aura of light surrounding the body of the image), Seven Buddhas of the Past seated on lotus petals are carved in relief and float amongst radiating flames.

Since *Yakushiji engi* and *Shichidaiji junrei nikki* both refer to the Yakushiji Yakushi mandorla as *Shichibutsu Yakushi*, Adachi proposed that the Yakushiji Yakushi's original mandorla was a visual representation of the Seven Medicine Buddhas outlined in Yijing's 707 version of the Medicine Buddha sutra, rather than Xuanzang's earlier version. Adachi mainly points out that while Xuanzang's version stated, "One should make seven of those Tathāgata images 造彼如來形像七軀," referring to making seven identical images of "*that* Tathāgata" (i.e. Bhaiṣyaja-guru), Yijing's version stated, "One should first respectfully make seven Buddha-form images 應先敬造七佛形像," referring to making seven *different* images of Medicine Buddhas. Frankly, I do not see a great difference between Xuanzang's and Yijing's scriptures and there is no reason that the seven Medicine Buddhas on the mandorla could just as equally be based on the earlier Xuanzang text, which expounds on the merits of depicting seven Medicine Buddhas; in this case, all Bhaiṣyaja-guru Buddha.

[11] For an image of mandorla #196, consult the exhibition catalog, *Tokubetsuten: Kondō butsu - Chugoku, Chōsen, Nihon* (Tokyo: Tokyo Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, 1986), 261.

We also need to be cautious and take into account the fact that the sources Adachi relies on were written several centuries after the Yakushiji Yakushi was made, and of course, there is a possibility that Chikamichi may have mistaken the Seven Buddhas of the Past on the mandorla for the Seven Medicine Buddhas; icons are not static and the meanings ascribed to them change over time. As I will argue in Chapter Five, the Shichibutsu Yakushi devotional cult was extremely popular among the ruling elite at the times when *Yakushiji engi* and Chikamichi's diary were compiled. Richard Davis suggests we view religious icons as fluid objects where there is a "plurality of ways viewers approach and encounter the visual object."[12] My guess is that during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Yakushiji Yakushi's original meaning was forgotten and the icon acquired a new meaning and identity as Shichibutsu Yakushi. In other words, it had "acquired a new significance by persons holding different conceptions in altered historical situations."[13]

Since there are no further descriptions of the *kebutsu* (for example, whether they were holding medicine jars in their left hands) one cannot say for certain if they were Yakushi images or the Seven Buddhas of the Past. But given the fact that both Xuanzang and Yijing translations were well known in Japan at the time the Yakushiji Yakushi was made, I agree with Adachi that, to some extent the seated Shichibutsu Yakushi icon type was inspired from canonical sources. With these issues in mind, we now turn to a discussion of Nakano

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[12] Davis, *Lives of Indian Images*, p. 9.

[13] Ibid., p. 11. See McCallum, "The Earliest Buddhist Statues in Japan," *Artibus Asiae* 61, no. 2 (2001): 156. See Padma Kaimal, "Shiva Nataraja: Shifting Meanings of an Icon," *The Art Bulletin* 81, no. 3 (1999): 390-419 (especially in the rejection of the idea that the meaning of the religious icon is uniform or static). Kaimal explores the use of textual evidence.

Genzō's essay from 1982, one of the earliest scholarly works on the seated Shichibutsu Yakushi icon type.[14]

Nakano's work is an ambitious endeavor to understand early Heian Yakushi images within their proper historical and religious contexts, an atypical practice in past Japanese art historical scholarship when most studies were concerned with matters of style, dating, and provenance. Recently, scholars have become much more rigorous in their analysis of textual and visual sources (Nagaoka Ryūsaku's scholarship for example), but Nakano's research in the eighties was one of the first attempts to explain the cultic function associated with early Heian Yakushi images.

The central theme of Nakano's essay is a discussion of the Shichibutsu Yakushi images and the various forms of worship of this icon type during the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries. The title, "Shichibutsu Yakushi Images in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries," is somewhat confusing, because rather than considering the statues in relation to their iconography and associated cultic practices of "eighth and ninth century Shichibutsu Yakushi," the first two sections of the essay in fact deal with tenth century Yakushi images from the Tamba and Tango region.[15] I found the methodology employed in his discussion of the tenth century Yakushi images rather questionable: while Nakano contends that these tenth century icons from Tamba and Tango show a continuation of an eighth and ninth century tradition of Shichibutsu Yakushi worship, he only goes so far as to demonstrate that the Tamba and Tango images fit the "Shichibutsu Yakushi" descriptive category through

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[14] Nakano Genzō, *Keka no geijutsu.*

[15] Nakano, *Keka no geijutsu*, pp. 63-67.

their associations with local Shichibutsu Yakushi legends and temple *engi*, not by their iconography. Visually, none of the tenth century Tamba/Tango Yakushi images resemble the early Heian seated type with Shichibutsu Yakushi mandorlas and it is not clear why they would be related to the eighth/ninth century tradition.

Nakano proceeds to differentiate the eighth/ninth century worship of Shichibutsu Yakushi as a separate devotional lineage from that which emerged after the tenth century under the religious authority of the Tendai sect. In fact, he asserts that the eighth and ninth century Shichibutsu Yakushi cult was characterized by their "apotropaic tendencies" and related to *goryō* worship.[16]

At the same time, he argues that there was no single iconographical tradition for representing Shichibutsu Yakushi in the eighth and ninth centuries.[17] To make matters even more complicated, he claims that these Shichibutsu Yakushi were not always based on Yijing's text, but also on the earlier Xuanzang text.[18] Nakano claims that Shichibutsu Yakushi images from the eighth and ninth centuries did not conform to a single icon type but varied greatly in iconography. For example, he categorizes single Yakushi images (both standing and seated) which had mandorlas with six or seven Medicine Buddha *kebutsu* as one iconographical type. This includes the Tōshōdaiji Kondō Yakushi and Murōji Golden Hall Yakushi (now identified as Shaka) for standing images and the Hōryuji Saiendō, Shin

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[16] Ibid., pp. 64, 74.

[17] Ibid., p. 96.

[18] Ibid., p. 98.

Yakushiji, Kokusekiji, Kamidaigoji, Shōjiji and Shishikutsuji Yakushi in the seated group.[19] In this latter group, Nakano reasons that since all of the *kebutsu* have the same mudrās, they were based on Xuanzang's text of representing Bhaiṣyaja-guru seven times, rather than seven different manifestations of the Medicine Master Buddha described in Yijing's text. Here again, I am doubtful about the relevance of differentiating the two versions of the Yakushi scripture – Japanese religious practices show that both sutras were utilized interchangeably, and though Yijing's translation introduces six other Medicine Buddha manifestations, the content and spiritual message of the two scriptures are essentially the same.

Thus Nakano argues that there were several "iconographical types," including a mid-ninth century set of seven standing Yakushi images that was enshrined in Enryakuji's Konpon chudō. Another iconography is noted in both *Asabashō* and *Kakuzenshō* describing a painting of Seven Medicine Buddhas that Saichō supposedly painted, each with different mudrās.[20] Nakano goes on to note that there were four Zenmyōshō kichijōō nyorai statues (one of the Medicine Buddhas mentioned in the Yijing translation) Saichō purportedly carved with his own hands while he was on his way to Tang China.[21] These, however, are no longer extant, and knowledge about them is based solely on textual descriptions.

Another iconographical type from the eighth and ninth centuries includes images where the Buddha, bodhisattva, and heavenly deity (*tenbu* 天部) are arranged together in a set

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[19] Ibid., pp. 94-95.

[20] *Kakuzenshō*, *TZ* 5, p. 442, fig. 33

[21] Nakano, *Keka no geijutsu*, p. 96.

of seven to comprise Shichibutsu Yakushi.[22] The example that Nakano provides for this is the Yakushi, Shūhōō, and Shishiku bodhisattva images from the old lecture hall at Tōshōdaiji which he claims were conceptualized and created as a Shichibutsu Yakushi set, though he does not really provide a convincing argument for this.[23] From the three pages of data he provides, Nakano asserts that there were in fact various iconographical types of Shichibutsu Yakushi existing in eighth and ninth century Japan.[24]

All in all, I have found that this typology, while certainly thought-provoking, makes the issue of Shichibutsu Yakushi imagery and its associated forms of worship frustratingly abstruse. In contrast to Nakano, I argue in Chapter Five that the Tendai iconographical and ritual tradition of Shichibutsu Yakushi that developed in the latter half of the Heian period constitutes the only fully definable instance of a unified cultic worship of Shichibutsu Yakushi. The following section will explore this representation of a single seated Medicine Buddha (Bhaiṣyaja-guru) with a mandorla invoking the six or seven different Medicine Buddhas.

3. Extant Icons of the Seated Shichibutsu Yakushi Tradition

A. Kuroishidera Yakushi

During the late eighth and early ninth century, the Shichibutsu Yakushi icon type was adopted in various parts of Japan. The Kuroishidera Yakushi from Iwate prefecture has a

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[22] Ibid., pp. 84-85, 98-99.

[23] Ibid., 84-85.

[24] Ibid., p. 98.

large halo on which seven fully sculpted small images of the Medicine Buddha are attached. Though the halo is a restoration, the Yakushi *kebutsu* were determined to be the original ones from the ninth century based on stylistic analysis, matching the ninth century dating of the Yakushi image which has an inscribed date of Jōgan 4 (862CE).[25] Though no longer extant, the Shōjōji 勝常寺 seated Yakushi's mandorla from Fukushima prefecture is also assumed to represent Shichibutsu Yakushi. This Yakushi is seated on a lotus pedestal, holding a covered medicine pot in his left hand while the right hand is raised in the *semui'in* gesture. The image is in the wood-core dry-lacquer technique, with traces of gilding, while the large boat shaped mandorla is made from Japanese cedar (*sugi*). Twisted grapevine foliage patterns (*budō karakusa moyō* 葡萄唐草模様) are embossed on the outer section bordering the head and body halos; between the foliage, there are seven holes that clearly indicate that *kebutsu* were attached originally.[26]

B. Shōjiji Yakushi

The Shōjiji 勝持寺 image (Kyoto) is very small, only 9.1 centimeters tall and is of the *danzō* (sandalwood) tradition; it is believed to be either an image brought over from Tang China or a copy of a Tang image.[27] The statue is made in the single-block technique from the head all the way down to the first level of the lotus petals including the mandorla, while the

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[25] Kuno Takeshi,"Kuroishidera Yakushi nyoraizō," *BK* 183 (1955): 96-103.

[26] Currently, a lone heavenly being is affixed to one of the holes.

[27] Itō, *Yakushi nyorai zō*, p. 58. For a detail photo of the pedestal, see plate 99 and p. 244 from *Sekai bijutsu zenshū* (Heian I), vol. 4 (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1961).

rest of the petals are made from separate pieces. The right hand forms the typical *semui* gesture and the left holds a medicine jar in its palm. The Shōjiji image has a unique, pear-shaped mandorla. The outermost section is similar to that of the Shin Yakushiji image in that it is adorned with jeweled flowers (*hōsōge* 宝相華), while six Medicine Buddha images (three on each side of the main image) are interspersed amongst them.[28] On the topmost part of the mandorla, there is another seated Buddha in relief, who forms the hand gesture known as *jōin* 定印 (Skt. dhyanamudrā) which represents the Buddha Dainichi 大日.[29] The presence of Dainichi Buddha 大日如来 and the *kongōsho* 金剛杵 (Skt.vajra), an esoteric ritual implement decorating the lower pedestal, clearly illustrates an esoteric Shichibutsu Yakushi tradition.[30] Moreover, the statue demonstrates a further development in the Shichibutsu Yakushi iconography by incorporating the Twelve Divine Generals (*Jūnishinshō*) in relief on the lower half of the mandorla in two registers (six on each side).

The small size of the Shōjiji image suggests that it was made as a personal devotional object for a lay person; presumably a religious advisor was consulted about the elaborate iconography. Little concerning its provenance is known, and scholars have given the image a ninth century date based on convincing stylistic analysis.

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29 Nishikawa "Yakushi nyorai zazō," p. 34; Itō Shirō, *Heian jidai chōkokushi no kenkyū* (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 2000), 148. Itō identifies this Buddha as the Hōkan nyorai 宝冠如来. Moreover, as I have discussed in chapter one, there are examples of the Medicine Buddha bearing the *jō-in* 定印 mudrā, so it can also represent another Yakushi.

30 Nishikawa,"Yakushi nyorai zazō," p. 34 and fn. 10.

In examining textual sources, it is possible to determine that the prototype for the Shōjiji icon type was developed in the late eighth century. Though no longer extant, there was a similar late eighth century Yakushi at Kōfukuin 興福院, a temple in the Heijō capital located just south of Saidaiji. According to *Kōfukuin engi* 興福院縁起, the Yakushi was the principal icon.[31] Ōe no Chikamichi writes about visiting and seeing the Yakushi image in his diary of 1106.[32] *Kōfukuin engi* notes that this temple was built by Fujiwara no Momokawa 藤原百川 (732-779), a Nara period court noble who served as a political advisor to Shōtoku and Kōnin tennō. Other sources claim that it was built by Kōnin in the year 770, so the temple was most likely established during that time. The main image was a monumental gilt bronze Yakushi image which had a mandorla with seven Yakushi images represented around its head halo and the Twelve Divine Generals around the body halo.

Another possible model for the Shōjiji image was the monumental Yakushi statue in Tōshōdaiji's Golden Hall. This image is said to have had Seven Buddhas, flanking bodhisattva attendants Nikkō and Gakkō, and Twelve Divine Generals carved on its original mandorla: 東薬師光中有七仏、日光月光十二神將有之.[33] However, as I have shown in

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[31] *Kōfukuin engi*, *KBS*, vol. 1, p. 333.

[32] *Shoji engi shū* (Suga family copy), Fujita, *KBS*, vol. 1, p. 333. Ōe no Chikamichi, *Shichidaiji nikki*, in *KBS*, vol. 1, p. 26.

[33] Compiled in the *Shoji kenritsu shidai*. For the *Shoji engi shū* entry on Tōshōdaiji, see Fujita, *KBS*, vol. 1, p. 277; also *Shoji kenritsu shidai* entry, p. 176.

The issue concerning the Yakushi's mandorla is a point of some contention. Relying on *engi*, Adachi Kō is of the opinion that the original mandorla was lost, and the present mandorla is not one that was made for the extant image. See Adachi Kō, *Nihon chōkokushi*, p. 55. Matsumoto Masaaki disagrees with this view by stating that such this kind of

Chapters Two and Three, Tōshōdaiji's's Golden Hall Yakushi is a standing image which influenced the development of the Enryakuji Konpon chūdō and the Jingoji Yakushi images, rather than the seated Shōjiji image.

A more likely possibility for a prototype is the original *honzon* of Tōji's Golden Hall which unfortunately has not survived. Tōji (Eastern temple) and Saiji (Western temple) were the only two official Buddhist institutions permitted within the newly established Heian capital. According to *Tōbōki*, a fourteenth century record compiling the history of Tōji, construction of both temples began in 796, two years after Kanmu tennō moved the capital from Heijō to Heian; however, it is not clear when the Golden Hall and the main icon was completed, since even when Kūkai was granted permission to reside there in 823, the temple was still unfinished. Given that the Golden Hall is the most important building in a temple complex, it must have been one of the first ones to be completed, perhaps around the turn of the ninth century.

Tōbōki states that the original *honzon* of Tōji's Golden Hall was a monumental seated Yakushi.[34] It had a mandorla, the description of which almost exactly matches that of the Shōjiji Yakushi: adorned with seven Medicine Buddhas three *shaku* tall on the upper section and with Twelve Divine Generals three *shaku* tall on the lower part of the mandorla. The Yakushi was also flanked by sculptures of Nikkō and Gakkō eight *shaku* tall (probably these

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disproportionately large mandorlas can be found on Buddha images in the Central Asian murals, and that the present mandorla is the original one for the extant Yakushi; see Matsumoto Masaaki, "Kōnin chōkoku no kigen," *Kokka* 721 (1952): 138-147.

[34] Adachi, *Nihon chōkokushi,* p. 56. See also *Tōbōki* [fascicle 1], Fujita, *KBS,* vol. 2, p. 388, (金堂中尊薬師丈六).

were not part of the mandorla but independent images). Moreover, the image purportedly contained a Buddha image inside its cavity (*tainaibutsu* 体内仏).[35] *Tōbōki* further notes that the seven Buddhas depicted on the mandorla formed the same hand gestures as the main icon, indicating that they were conceived as Shichibutsu Yakushi. In addition, on the lower portion of the mandorla, the Twelve Divine Generals were arranged in three registers (two generals on each register – so a total of twelve with six on each side). The main Yakushi had his right hand raised in the *semui* and his left hand lowered in the *yogan'in,* without holding a medicine pot. The left foot rested on the right knee in the demon-subduing pose (*gōmaza* 降魔座). From this we can conclude that the Shōjiji Yakushi was modeled after the Tōji *honzon*, and made after Shōjiji became strongly associated with esoteric Buddhism, which explains the representation of esoteric ritual implements on its pedestal.

The present Tōji Yakushi triad was made when the Golden Hall was reconstructed in 1603 by the sculptors Keiri 慶理, Keiyū 慶猶 and Keiei 慶英. In keeping with the iconographic type of the original icon, the image's right hand forms the *semui'in* while the left hand rests on the left knee, without holding a medicine jar. The mandorla is adorned with Seven Medicine Buddhas. Twelve fully sculptures of the Divine Generals decorate the lower part of the *mokakeza* pedestal, just underneath the drapery overhang, three on each side. Though the style of the Yakushi triad must have changed considerably to suit the aesthetic tastes of the seventeenth century, the new icon was most likely made in the iconographical likeness of the original.

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[35] *Tōbōki* [fascicle 1], Fujita, *KBS,* vol. 2, p. 388.

As demonstrated in the above non-extant and extant examples, the seated Shichibutsu Yakushi icon type, consisting of a seated Bhaiṣyaja-guru with a mandorla representing six or seven Medicine Buddhas was probably developed as early as the 720s, if we accept Adachi's theory that the Yakushiji Golden Hall Yakushi came with a mandorla representing seven Medicine Buddhas. The Kōfukuin, Tōshōdaiji Golden Hall, and Tōji Golden Hall Yakushi images were made in the late eighth century to the early ninth, reflecting a further elaboration (and a certain economy) of the Shichibutsu iconography by representing not only the seven Medicine Buddhas on the mandorla, but also the Twelve Divine Generals as well, rather than having them as significantly more costly independent statues.

C. Ninnaji 仁和寺 Seated Image

Though it is from a later period, the Ninnaji Hokuin 仁和寺北院 seated Yakushi is an important icon because it closely matches the material and iconography of the Shōjiji image. The Ninnaji Hokuin Yakushi was dedicated in 1082 and then partially destroyed in the fire of 1103.[36] Details about the original *honzon* are recorded in "Ninnaji Hokuindō ganmon"仁和寺北院堂願文 included in *Gōtotoku nagon ganmonshū* 江都督納言願文集, describing the icon as a sandalwood Tathāgata image, six *sun* tall, with the Seven Medicine Buddhas, Nikkō, Gakkō bodisattvas on the mandorla, and the Twelve Divine Generals

[36]For details on the Ninnaji Hokuin Yakushi, see Itō, *Heian jidai chōkokushi,* pp. 139-160. For excellent color photographs of the Ninnnaji Hokuin Yakushi, consult Shimizu Masumi ed., *Nyorai*, in *Nihon no butsuzō daihyakka*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Gyōsei, 1990), pp.124-125.

carved on the pedestal area.[37] The *ganmon* explains the sacred history of the image; it was brought back to Japan from Tang China by Kūkai and it became the personal worship icon (*nenjibutsu* 念持仏) of the monk-prince Shōshin 性信親王 (1005-1085), the fourth son of Sanjō tennō. *Chōwa shinnō gyoki* 長和親王御記 also traces the image back to Kūkai, claiming that he made the sandalwood image when he crossed the sea to China. Though both these accounts are obviously embellishments, it emphasizes the sanctity of the icon by implying that it was hand-carved by Kūkai, evoking the sandalwood tradition of Tang China.[38]

The extant seated Yakushi enshrined today at the Reimeiden 霊明殿 of Ninnaji resembles the description of the original image. According to Itō Shirō, the Hokuin hall of Ninnaji where the icon was originally housed was built by Daisōjō Saishin 済信 (Great Grand Master Saishin) and it was the principal monastery-dwelling (*honbō* 本房) of subsequent generations of monk-princes. The Kamakura period compilation, *Sansōki ruiju* 三僧記類聚, mentions that a fire broke out in Kenwa 5 (1103), damaging both the building and the *honzon*. Only the lower torso and the pedestal were salvaged from the fire. In 1103-4-1, work began on making a new image to replace the damaged one. The sculptors who worked on this were Ensei 円勢 and Chōen 長円. Rather than making the statue at their workshop, the sculptors visited the temple daily to do their work on site. The image was completed on 1103-5-4 and the eyes painted in. About two months later, the Eye-Opening Ceremony was

[37] 奉安置白檀六寸如来像、光中造七仏薬師、日光月光二菩薩像、座辺刻宫毘羅等十二大将.

[38] Itō, *Heian jidai chōkokushi,* p. 139.

held and the charred remains of the original *honzon* was placed inside the cavity of the new one, and temporarily housed at Kannon'in.[39]

Parts of the Hokuin (the Yakushi hall and library) were rebuilt in 1114. In 1887 a fire completely destroyed the structure and it was never rebuilt again. Itō states that while some scholars speculate that the present Yakushi was carved from the charred remains of the original, he suggests that it was made entirely new. This image is presently housed at the Reimeiden as its *honzon*, in a Kamakura period shrine. Made in the plain-wood style, it is only 10.7 centimeters high, or 21.9 centimeters if the pedestal is included. Some polychrome has been applied to the head, *byakugō*, eyes, mouth, moustache, as well as on the bodhisattvas and the Twelve Divine Generals. Cut gold leaf ornamentation (*kirikane*) was applied lavishly to adorn the drapery, mandorla and pedestal. The snail-shaped curls have been carved out individually, while the *nikkeishu* (now lost) and *byakugō* were inserted into the head. As for the symbolic hand gestures, the right hand forms the *semui'in* and the left holds a medicine jar, though this is a restoration.

One of the most remarkable features of this image is the *kōhei* 後屏, a decorative rectangular-shaped backing, which supports the halo. It is elaborately carved, with the bodhisattvas Nikkō and Gakkō carved in relief on the right and left sides of the front panel, flanking the main image. They both hold lotus stems at the end of which lunar and solar disks are set, but this pair is a rare example where both bodhisattvas lower their right hands to the side and hold lotus stems in their left hands.

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[39] Ibid., p. 140.

On the halo, seven Medicine Buddha images (each holding a medicine jar) are carved in relief. The rectangular *senjigata* 宣字型 pedestal has the Twelve Divine Generals carved in relief, three on each side of the pedestal. The pedestal legs and the lower pedestal base frame (*shitakamachi* 下框) are restorations. This image clearly resembles the description of the original Hokuin Yakushi that appears in the *ganmon*. Though it is an early twelfth century image, the temple legends claim that it can be traced back to Kūkai in the ninth century.[40] Though the *ganmon's* claim that the image was brought back from Tang China by Kūkai is probably a fabrication to further enhance the sacred legitimacy of the icon, it should be noted that this iconography appears to be of the same late eighth, early ninth century iconographical lineage as that of Tōji's Golden Hall Yakushi and the Shōjiji Yakushi.

The combination of the rectangular backing with a round halo for framing the Buddha image is very rare in Japan. Itō notes that it originated in Indian Gupta period art, which eventually made its way to China. In Indian examples, the backing is usually combined with a throne while the employment of a Sumeru throne is a Chinese invention. Although the image is a late Heian piece, the actual decorative style and iconography follows the Tang Chinese tradition of the eighth and early ninth centuries.[41]

4. Unorthodox Forms

In this section, three early Heian Yakushi images often referred to as Shichibutsu Yakushi will be discussed; all are fascinating and enigmatic statues, since they are not

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[40] Itō, *Heian jidai chōkokushi*, p. 139. Itō notes that one legend claims that it was made by Saichō (fn. 2).

[41] Ibid., p. 147.

represented in the traditional form of the Yakushi Buddha, but rather, that of a bodhisattva or heavenly deity. The first example is the Yakuonji 薬恩寺 (Kyoto prefecture)Yakushi, identified as a Yakushi deity, and on stylistic grounds dated to the late eighth to early ninth centuries.[42] It is 163 centimeters tall, carved from *keyaki* in the single-block construction (*ichiboku zukuri*), with a polychrome finish. The most striking characteristic of this image is that it is represented in the likeness of a heavenly deity (*tenbu* 天部), wearing a Chinese-style flowing robe (*chōketsui* 長袂衣) with elaborate trumpet sleeves (*hatasode* 鰭袖). Rather than having snail-shaped curls and a *nikkei* typical of Buddhas, this Yakushi wears a very simple topknot and a single banded diadem. There are traces of floral patterns in polychrome decorating the robe. The Yakushi raises its right hand in the rare form of the *semui'in*, the middle finger bent inward and the thumb joined at the tips.[43] The left hand forms the mudrā of the fulfilling of the vow (*segan'in*).

The second example is the *honzon* of Kōryūji 広隆寺 (Kyoto), a secret image (*hibutsu*) enshrined in a tabernacle in their treasure house, the Reihōkan 霊宝館.[44] It is a rather peculiar image, standing 96.7 centimeters tall and having the celestial form of Kichijōten 吉祥天 (Skt. Lakśmī, also known as Śrīmahādevī), wearing a topknot, a diadem band, and also clad in Chinese robes. A cloud-shaped decoration is attached to the front central portion of the diadem, and the diadem band consists of several layers; double string, beaded string,

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[42] Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei*, vol. 3, pl. 344.

[43] The Daigoji Yakushi's right hand forms this mudrā. The Nara Yakushiji Yakushi also forms this mudrā, but instead of the middle finger, indents the index finger which joins the tip of the thumb.

[44] Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei*, vol. 3, pl. 8.

double string and a band of petals at the very top. The earlobes are not pierced, and a thin moustache and beard are painted around the Yakushi's lips. The Chinese-style attire consists of several layers, a V-necked *kaitō-e* 襠襠衣 over which a tunic with trumpet-shaped sleeves tied in a knot at the waist is worn. The Yakushi also wears a skirt-like garment (*kun*), the folds of which are articulated by two concentric circles. He also dons a sash (*jōhaku* 条帛) resting on the left shoulder and crossing over the front, as well as a scarf (*tenne* 天衣) wrapped over both shoulders, falling down the sides of the chest and disappearing into the armpits. Wrists, hands and the medicine jar held in the left palm, these are all restorations.[45]

Elaborate polychrome has been applied to the image and while there are a few places where white gesso can be seen, in most areas, the colors were painted directly on the wood. The hair is painted *gunjō* (a blue-green color) and gold foil covers the diadem band. The outer robe is colored blue-green while the inner robe is red. Floral patterns of blue-green and red decorate the outer robe. The statue, based on the fact that it is made from a single block of wood (up to the restored hands and wrists), the polychroming and decorative motifs on the robe, similar to those seen in various Nara period Shōsōin treasures, suggests a date in the early Heian period (late eighth, early ninth).[46]

The temple's legendary history describes Kōryūji as having been established by Prince Shōtoku in Suiko 11(603). The original *honzon* was a seated Miroku bosatsu (Skt.

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[45] Inoue Tadashi observes that it is a *mani* jewel the Yakushi grasps. It is hard to tell from the photographs. Inoue Tadashi, "Shinbutsu shūgō no seishin to zōkei," in Tanabe Saburōsuke ed., *Zusetsu Nihon no bukkyō,* vol. 6. *Shinbutsu shūgō to shugen* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1989), 63.

[46] Itō, *Heian jidai chōkokushi*, p. 53. Tadashi views the polychroming as later work of the tenth century. Inoue, "Shinbutsu shūgō," pp. 63-64.

Maitreya) from Paekche.[47] *Kōryuji shizai kōtai jitsurokuchō* of Jōgan 15 (813) notes that at some point in time this Miroku image was lost and replaced by a three *shaku* tall sandalwood Yakushi image with miraculous powers (霊験薬師仏壇像壱軀居高三尺).[48] The current polychromed Yakushi is probably not the same as the one mentioned in the *jitsurokuchō*, since it was a "seated Yakushi three *shaku* tall" whereas the extant Yakushi is a standing image, about 3 *shaku* tall, though there is also the possibility that the compiler of *Kōryuji shizai kōtai jitsurokuchō* erroneously wrote down *kyokō* 居高 (seated height).

There is another Yakushi image at Kōryūji, similar to the one enshrined in the Reihōkan 霊宝館, encased in a double-doored shrine in the Soshidō 祖師堂.[49] It is slightly taller than the Reihōkan image, being 101.8 centimeters tall (3 *shaku* 3 *sun,* 6 *bun*) and made out of Japanese cypress (*hinoki*) in the single-block construction; the absence of a central cavity suggests that it is an early Heian sculpture. The head supports a tall topknot that sweeps into one large snail-shaped curl (when viewed from the side) and is adorned by a simple diadem band with a large triangular central plaque. The hands and medicine jar are restorations. Similar to the Reihōkan Yakushi, the image is clad in a Chinese multi-layered robe with a V-neck and trumpet-sleeves. The drapery on the skirt is not articulated except for the single vertical fold down the middle.

Several temple legends pertain to the Kōryūji Yakushi, one of which seems to refer to the Reihōkan image; according to a temple legend included in *Kōryūji raiyūki* 広隆寺来由記

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[47] Mōri, "Kōryūji no honzon to iken no mondai," in *Nihon butsuzōshi kenkyū,* pp.71-72.

[48] *Kōryuji shizai kōtai jitsurokuchō* 広隆寺資材校替実録帳, *DNBZ*, vol. 3, p. 56.

[49] See Inoue, "Shinbutsu shūgō," p. 62 for a photograph of the image.

of 1499, the image was carved from a large numinous tree that stood in front of the Otokuni Shrine of Yamashiro 山城乙訓社, a shrine dedicated to the god Mukō myōjin 向日明神. The tree was old and decaying, but from time to time it displayed miraculous signs by emitting light. A woodcutter, chanting "Namu Yakushi butsu 南無薬師佛," fashioned a Buddhist image from this sacred tree in an instant and enshrined it at the shrine, then vanished. People believed that the image was fashioned by none other than Mukō myōjin himself, who took the form of a woodcutter. When the Yakushi image was carved out of this tree and enshrined, miraculous events occurred from time to time. By royal edict the image was presented to a temple called Gantokuji 願徳寺 (Kyoto). Subsequently, when Seiwa tennō 清和天皇 (r. 858-876) became ill in Jogan 6 (864), the image was transferred to Kōryūji by royal order, and the priest Dōshō 道昌 was asked to perform an esoteric empowerment ritual (*kaji*) to pray for the monarch's recovery. *Kōryūji raiyuki* further explains that in Chōwa 3 (1014-5-5), the image emitted light. There were many other auspicious occurrences so the Yakushi was officially designated as Zenmyōshō kichijōō nyorai (the first of the seven Medicine Buddhas appearing in the Yijing translation).[50]

The Kōryūji Yakushi images urge us to ask the following questions: Why did people identify these images as Yakushi when they were not represented in the standard iconographical form of a Medicine Buddha? What kinds of factors allowed for this identification to take place? The image is regarded by devotees as a Yakushi, and the

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[50] Inoue, "Shinbutsu shūgō," pp. 59-60. *Kōryūji raiyūki, DNBZ*, vol. 3, pp. 80.

medicine jar firmly grasped in the left hand denotes that it is indeed a Medicine Buddha.[51] But the jeweled diadem band, the sash (*jōhaku*), and scarf (*tenne*), as well as the marks left on the chest where neckpieces and jewelry strings would have been attached, reveal the standard traits of a bodhisattva and the attire (Tang-style robe) is that of a heavenly deity. *Raiyūki* gives the formal title of this image as Zenmyōshō kichijōō nyorai, which, as I have noted, is the first Medicine Buddha appearing in the *Shichibutsu Yakushi kyō.*

The reference to Zenmyōshō kichijōō taking the form of a bodhisattva appears in appropriate form to represent Zenmyōshō kichijōō nyorai, one of the Shichibutsu Yakushi. *Asabashō*, which notes that when Saichō was temporarily delayed due to bad weather in Kyushu on his way to China, he carved four Yakushi images at Dazaifu for safe sea travel. All of the Yakushi images held a jewel in their left hand. Furthermore, *Asabashō* notes that these four Yakushi wore a heavenly crown and had scarves and earrings. The most noteworthy part of this passage is that *Asabashō* goes on to comment that they resembled a bodhisattva image (皆悉如菩薩像) and were three *shaku* tall.[52]

The above passage demonstrates that when Yijing's translation became known in Japan, there was a practice of worshiping one of the seven Medicine Buddhas, the Zenmyōshō kichijōō nyorai, as distinct from Bhaiṣyaja-guru. Perhaps it was the name Zenmyōshō kichijōō nyorai, which includes the word "auspicious" (kichijō) that inspired

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[51] Itō reasons, "Even though the left hand is a restoration, since the image was always conceived as a Yakushi, the left hand held the same attribute from the beginning." Itō, *Heian chōkokushi,*p. 56.

[52] *Asabashō*, *TZ* 8, fascicle 46 (*Yakushi* 薬師), p. 305a. Saichō's biography says that these four Yakushi were 6 *shaku* tall.

priests to attribute some of the iconographical features of the heavenly deva Kichijō ten to this particular Shichibutsu Yakushi.[53]

More importantly, Kōryūji Yakushi's peculiar features can be described as an image first conceived as a local god and later given a new identity as Yakushi Buddha when the image was transferred from Otokuni shrine to Gantokuji. As Itō points out, in the *Montoku jitsuroku* 文徳実録 of 878 there is a well-known passage that reads (entry date 857-10-15): "In the province of Hitachi there are two *kami* from Ōaraiisosaki and Sakatsuaiisosaki, and they were famous gods called Masters of Medicine bodhisattvas." (在常陸国大洗磯前酒列磯前両神、号薬師菩薩名神).

According to Ito, this is a case where the *kami* from Ōaraiisosaki 大洗磯前 and Sakatsuaiisosaki 酒列磯前 in the land of Hitachi (Ibaragi prefecture) are identified as Medicine Masters and given bodhisattva status.[54] While this passage does not give any indication of the *kami's* physical form, it does strongly suggest that some of the early Heian *kami* took on iconographical traits of Buddhist divinities.

We must now question what it means for an image to both be a Buddhist deity (Yakushi), and a non-Buddhist god (*kami*, i.e. Mukō myōjin of Otokuni shrine). Modern scholarship gives the assimilation of Buddhist and local gods the term *shinbutsu shūgō* 神仏習合, literally, the amalgamation of the Buddhas and non-Buddhist *kami*. Allan Grapard observes this as not so much a syncretism between "Buddhism" and "Shinto" but more

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[53] Interestingly, Kōryūji owns five standing images of Kichijōten. See Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei*, vol. 3, pp. 32-33.

[54] Itō, *Heian chōkokushi*, p. 56.

accurately, "specific relations between shrines and temples where those divinities were enshrined." [55] Scholars have dealt with this issue by locating major historical events that they believe reflects concrete evidence of *shinbutsu shūgō.* One way this has been investigated is to trace the emergence of *jingūji* 神宮寺: temples built in the precincts of a shrine, thus considered to be actual, physical manifestations of *shinbutsu shūgō.*[56] One of the earliest and influential studies on *shinbutsu shūgō* by Tsuji Zennosuke discusses *shinbutsu shūgō* as a merging of *kami* worship with Buddhism, and distinguishes this early mingling from the later *honji suijaku* 本地垂迹 based on a Buddhist theory where *kami* came to be identified with certain Buddhist deities.[57] Allan Grapard has also done considerable work in regard to this topic. He states:

> The jingūji were institutions symbolizing early trends of non-exclusive attitudes toward autochthonous and imported creeds and practices, while they were at the same time institutions expressing the power of houses concerned with controlling cultic matters, such as the Fujiwara house."[58]

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[55] Allan G. Grapard, " Religious Practices," in *The Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 2, *Heian Japan,* ed. Donald H. Shively and William H. McCullough (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 565.

[56] *Jingūji* were Buddhist temples erected on or near the shrine precincts. For a discussion of *jingūji*, see Allan G. Grapard, "The Economics of Ritual Power," in *Shinto in History: Ways of the Kami*, edited by John Breen and Mark Teeuwen (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 74; see Inoue, "Shinbutsu shūgō," p. 70.

[57] Tsuji Zennosuke, *Nihon bukkyōshi* 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1944), 439.

[58] Grapard, "The Economics of Ritual Power," p. 74.

Christine Guth Kanda, in a book on Hachiman statues, contends that the first images housed in non-Buddhist shrines represented Buddhist divinities.[59] She gives an example of a shrine-temple complex dedicated to the *kami* Hiko 比古 of Wakasa 若狭 province. According to *Ruijū kokushi*, the shrine priest Wake no Takatsugu of Hiko Shrine stated that according to ancient records, there was a series of epidemics during the Yōrō era (717-724) that killed many people and caused great suffering because the crops did not ripen. Priest Takatsugu's ancestor Akamaro performed austerities in the mountains and the deity Hiko responded by taking human form and told him that he was suffering and wished to take refuge in the Buddhist doctrine. He asked Akamaro to perform ascetic practices on his behalf, and Akamaro complied with the deity's wishes and erected a worship hall and made a Buddhist image; the temple was called Jinganji.[60] Kanda states that this story is significant in that it emphasizes a new understanding of *kami,* not just as mysterious and awe-inspiring presences but as sentient beings whose karma could be improved as well as the people living under his protection by the dedication of Buddhist rituals and images.[61]

Kanda explains why there were few such images extant today. One reason is that they were destroyed in fires that frequently broke out in temples. The second reason was due to the forced official separation of Buddhist and Shinto establishments in the Meiji period that led to a widespread destruction of such images enshrined in syncretic establishments.

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[59] Christine Guth Kanda, *Shinzō: Hachiman Imagery and its Development* (Cambridge Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 1985), 10.

[60] *Ruijū kokushi* [fascicle 180], *KT* 6, p. 260.

[61] Kanda, *Shinzō*, p. 11.

Further evidence for local gods being created in Buddhist iconographical form is found in *Ise no kuni Tado Jingūji garan shizaichō* (Records of the founding of Tado Jingūji Temple, Ise Province) of 801, one of the earliest known accounts of a *jingūji*:

> In the past… in the seventh year of Tenpyō Hōji [763] a shrine was located in the north where there was a well. Mangan Zenshi 満願禅師 resided in this sacred place and respectfully made a one *jō* six *shaku* [statue of] Amida. At this time there was a man, who by divine oracle, said, "I am Tado-jin. In the past, for many ages I committed grave sins. As a result, I became a kami. Now I hope to rid myself forever of my kami form and desire to take refuge in the three jewels of Buddhism". This sort of oracle, though unclear, was repeated time and again. Therefore, Mangan Zenshi cleared the southern slope of Shinza-san [literally, "mountain where the kami dwells"], erected a small temple [*dō*], and made an image of the deity. He named it Tado Great Bodhisattva.[62]

As illustrated, the *jingūji* functioned as a place where the Buddhist clergy performed Buddhist rites in front of the *kami* with the ultimate goal of "releasing the god" from their unenlightened state and guiding them to Buddhist enlightenment.[63] Since this passage shows a local deity receiving the Buddhist status of bodhisattva, it is conceivable that the image was made in bodhisattva form. It is certainly plausible that in the early history of the physical and institutional merging of local shrine and Buddhist temple, particularly in the Buddhist rhetoric of "localizing gods," *kami* were commissioned by Buddhist priests to have the characteristic features of Buddhist deities.[64]

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[62] Ibid., p. 12.

[63] Grapard, p. 74.

[64] Inoue, "Shinbutsu shūgō," p. 64.

From the above two accounts, it becomes clear that with the influence of Buddhism, local gods came to be anthropomorphized in the Nara and Heian periods. Moreover, Buddhist images also came to be enshrined in shrine-temple complexes for the *kami's* behalf. Seen in this context, the Kōryūji image, originally made from the sacred tree of Otokuni Shrine associated to the deity Mukō myōjin, was probably first created as the deity Mukō in bodhisattva form, and later reassigned a new identity as Yakushi at Koryūji. Similarly, while very little is known about the early history of Yakuonji, the proximity of the shrine to Iwashimizu Hachiman shrine-temple complex in the Muromachi period indicates that Yakuonji may have had close cultic ties to the god Hachiman from an earlier time.[65] Another fascinating example of a Medicine Buddha in bodhisattva form is the Jōnenji Yakushi.[66] It is a life-size figure of 170.5 centimeters tall and is made out of *keyaki* in the single-block technique. According to temple legend, the image originally belonged to Hōsono shrine 祝園神社 which was part of Yakushiji jingūji 薬師寺神宮寺. The icon has long been known as a Yakushi, though its features clearly take the form of a bodhisattva, wearing a high crown, scarf (*tenne*), sash (*jōhaku*) and skirt (*kun*). It is not adorned with any elaborate jeweled strings often found adorning the necks and chests of bodhisattva images but does wear bracelets (*hisen* 臂釧) on both arms. Unlike Yakushi that makes the *semui* mudrā with the right hand, the image's right arm is lowered straight down along the body, while the left arm is bent with the left palm facing forward toward the viewer. The left index and little fingers are raised

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65 "Kyotofu no chimei," in *Nihon rekishi chimei taikei*, vol. 26 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1981), 176.

66 Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei,* vol. 3, pl. 370.

while the thumb, middle and ring fingers are closed in. A photograph of the image from 1950, prior to restorations, shows that the left arm is raised with palm facing upward, holding a medicine pot. [67]

One of the unconventional and interesting features of this image is the cylindrical high-crown. There are no elaborate decorations on the crown itself, though the base is adorned with a band of floral patterns followed by a string of beads (or pearls). Moreover, the scarf is arranged at the lower front in a double loop-over format, but the lower loop entwines over the upper loop to form a W, as interesting and rare motif. The face is also accentuated by thin, elegant eyebrows that are joined together to form a single, wavy line. The "connected eyebrows" (*renbi* 連眉) originate from the Buddhist images on the wall paintings of Ajanta, India and can be found on a few Heian period images.[68]

While this is merely speculation, from the general context of *shinbutsu shūgō*, the image may have been conceived as the *kami* of Hōsono shrine and represented as a bodhisattva image; when the shrine came under the control of Yakushiji jingūji, the identification of the Hōsono *kami* as that of Yakushi Buddha was probably made. An unidentified standing male *kami* image at Kachioji (102.3 centimeters tall) has a very similar iconography to that of the Kōryūji Yakushi images.[69] The head has a large topknot and a

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[67] Itō says that the hand and medicine jar from the 1950 photograph are also Edo period restorations, but it is possible that this was based on the original configuration. Itō, *Heian chōkokushi,* p. 56.

[68] Andō Yoshika 安藤佳香, "Kachioji Yakushi sanzonkō – shinbutsu shūgō no isshōsa to shite," *BG* 163 (1985): 31-34.

[69] Ito, *Heian chōkokushi*, p. 57. Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei,* vol. 7, pl. 246.

broad diadem band, and the *sandō* 三道 is represented.[70] Both hands form fists, the left on top of the right, and have a slot which suggests that it once held a *shaku* 笏, a flat staff symbolizing authority, commonly held by *kami* images from the ninth century.[71] The image wears a flowing Chinese-style robe with trumpet sleeves and a scarf covers both shoulders, the ends of which fall down the front sides of the body and disappear into the armpits; the same arrangement can be observed in the Kōryūji Yakushi's scarf.

In her extensive study of the Kachioji Yakushi triad (dated late ninth century), Andō Yoshika explores the cultural and religious backdrop which may have allowed for the assimilation of Yakushi Buddha belief with local indigenous cults. She states that the nature of Yakushi as a master of medicine, for example, worked well in the assimilation with local pre-Buddhist beliefs in healing. In Japanese, 薬師 can be read as *kusushi* (くすし), which in this context referred to *kami* known for healing. While the term *kusushi* first appears in the medieval period, gods of healing, such as Ōnamuchi no kami 大己貴神 and Sukunahikona no kami 少彦名神 are recorded in the *Nihon shoki*.[72] The functional similarities between Buddha Yakushi and healing *kami* led to the natural merging of the two belief systems.[73]

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[70] One of the auspicious marks of Buddhist deities, represented by three distinctive lines on the neck.

[71] Kanda explains this as "an elongated plaque, emblem of secular authority. Kanda, *Shinzō,* p. 2.

[72] Akiyama, *Yakushi zōzō,* pp. 176-177. *Nihon shoki* [fascicle 1], *KT,* vol. 1.

[73] Andō, "Kachioji Yakushi," pp. 43-45.

Andō asserts that this was also the reason behind the enshrining of so many Yakushi images in *kokubunji* (provincial temples established by Shōmu in 741).[74] Though originally, in the Nara period, *kokubunji* were set up to house Śākyamuni, many of them were restored in the Heian period and Yakushi images were housed instead.[75] Images made as *honzon* for *kokubunji* were typically not from the capital but were, rather, produced locally. The provincial governing bodies (*gunjisō*) of each province thus supervised the production of images for their local *kokubunji*. Andō surmises that Yakushi images were a particularly popular choice as *honzon* for *kokubunji* because of the healing and apotropaic powers that the proponents of the *shinbutsu shūgō* and *kokubunj*, i.e., the wealthy and powerful local class, found appealing.[76] Because Yakushi's thaumaturgic features coincided with characteristics also held by local *kami* of healing, this provided a strong basis for the wealthy and powerful local elites to promote the active amalgamation of Buddhas (such as Yakushi) with local *kami*.[77] The Kōryūji, Yakuonji, and Jōnenji Yakushi, in the syncretic form of bodhisattva

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[74] Ibid., p. 46.

[75] Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō*, 49-74. Many of the *kokubunji* burned down in fires between 770-780, and during the Heian period the rise of state-sponsored private temples called *jōgakuji*, as well as the breakdown of the *ritsuryō* system led to the general decline of *kokubunji* by the *insei* period. Still, today there are 52 *kokubunji* that still stand and many of the principal deity of these temples are Yakushi. A chart drawn up by Nishio demonstrates that over eighty percent of the *honzon* installed in the 36 *kokubunji* (where the icons can be properly identified), are Yakushi images. Nishio explores the development of *kokubunji* from the time the edict was passed in order to find out when and why Yakushi came to be the preferred icon of choice for installation in *kokubunji* temples.

[76] Andō, "Kachioji Yakushi," pp. 45-46.

[77] Ibid., p. 46.

and heavenly deity, are particularly illuminating in the context of how Yakushi images visually represented the merging of Buddhist practices with local cultic *kami* worship.

5. The Founding and Early History of Shin Yakushiji: A Case Study

Shin Yakushiji located in Nara prefecture stands in a quiet, residential area not too far from Kasuga Shrine. Today, the temple complex consists of a modest Main Hall (Hondō 本堂), a bell tower, a Jizō hall, but has lost much of the grandeur of its Nara period past when it boasted two pagodas and housed seven monumental Medicine Buddha statues in its Golden Hall (Kondō). Modern visitors who step inside the main hall can be quite taken, however, by the arresting image of a seated Yakushi, placed on an earthen rounded mound and surrounded by an entourage of Twelve Divine Generals (*Jūnishinshō*), standing firm, fierce and proud. These impressive statues were not the original icons of Shin Yakushiji however and one must first turn to the early history of the temple's founding to fully understand the present day images.

Like many temple icons, the details of Shin Yakushiji image's origins as well as the history of the temple during the late eighth century are marked by uncertainty and obscurity. The following passage from the early twelfth century *Todaiji yōroku* describes the founding of Shin Yakushiji:

> In the third month of Tenpyō 19 (747), because the tennō (Shōmu) was indisposed, his royal consort Ninshō (Kōmyō) built Shin Yakushiji, and had images of the Seven

Medicine Buddhas made (天平十九年丁亥三月、仁聖皇后縁天皇不予、立新薬師寺、幷造七佛薬師像).[78]

Based on this passage, there were seven monumental Yakushi images made as the *honzon* for the Golden Hall of Shin Yakushiji, suggesting that this set was the earliest documented example of Shichibutsu Yakushi and its devotional worship. Several other historical sources leading up to the founding of Shinyakushji relate that Shōmu tennō was ill for some time, and this may have encouraged the building of a temple dedicated to healing. The *Shoku Nihongi* entry of Tenpyō 17(745-9-19) relates that Shōmu tennō, being ill, ordered Yakushi repentance rituals (*keka*) to be held at various temples and purified sites in renowned mountains.[79] An entry of the next day further states that an order was issued to make seven monumental statues of the Yakushi Buddha, each six *shaku*, three *sun* tall and to copy seven fascicles from the Yakushi sutra.[80] Shōmu's continued ill health spurred the need to build a grand temple near the capital equipped with repentance ritual halls (*kekasho*) and splendid monumental Medicine Buddha images. Though it is not clear whether the seven monumental statues of Yakushi were actually made and where they were enshrined from the

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[78] Shimizu Masumi 清水眞澄 and Inagi Yoshikazu 稲木吉一, *Shin Yakushiji to Byakugōji, Enjōji* (Tokyo: Hoikusha, 1990), 5; *Todaiji yōroku,* Tsutsui Eishun ed., (Osaka: Zenkoku Shobō, 1944), p. 15.

[79] *Shoku Nihongi*, in *SKNBT*, vol. 3, pp. 16-17.

[80] (又造薬師仏像七軀、高六尺三寸、并写経七巻), *Shoku Nihongi*, *SNKBT*, vol. 3, pp. 16-17.

Tenpyō 17 (745-9-20) edict, [81] many scholars believe that it led to the establishment of Shin Yakushiji and its seven monumental Yakushi statues.[82]

An illustration in the *Tōdaiji sankai shishizu* 東大寺山堺四至図 of Tenpyō shōhō 8 (756)provides information on the early layout of the Golden Hall, showing a seven-bayed structure that would have been adequate for seven monumental Yakushi images.[83] These seven Yakushi statues were made of clay and were most likely completed by 751.[84] What was particularly impressive about Shin Yakushiji is that a full iconographical program was developed around the seven Yakushi images, with the addition of the bodhisattva attendants Nikkō and Gakkō and the Twelve Divine Generals. This sculptural program in its entirety was completed by 763. [85]

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[81]Nishikawa Shinji 西川新次. "Shin Yakushiji," in *Yamato koji taikan*, vol. 4, *Shinyakushi-ji, Byakugō-ji, Enjō-ji,* Ota Hakutaro, et al. ed. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shōten, 1977), 11-12.

[82] Shimizu and Inagi, *Shin Yakushiji,* p. 48. Shimizu notes that this theory was first proposed by Kobayashi Takeshi and also supported by Akiyama Dai.

[83] Since there were seven images, it would be more appropriate to have a nine bay hall in order to house all seven images. However, Nishikawa explains that simplifying the number of bays to depict temple halls was a common practice, and he notes that even the eleven-bay Tōdaiji Daibutsuden was represented as a three bay hall. Given this fact, Nishikawa thinks that the seven bays drawn in the map were intentional in order to highlight the nine-bay hall. Nishikawa Shinji. "Shin Yakushiji," p. 7. For a photo of the Shōsōin collection *Tōdaiji sankai shishizu*, see p. 9.

[84] Mōri Hisashi, *Shin Yakushijikō* (Kyoto: Kawara Shoten, 1947), 80-82. *Shakkyōsho shihitsu jikutō nōchō* 写経所紙筆軸等納帳 (compiled in Tenpyō Shōhō 2 [750]) notes that between the years 750-751, there was a purchase of pigment and gold leaf suggesting the completion of Shichibutsu Yakushi images, which Mōri postulates were the Shin Yakushiji Shichibutsu Yakushi images. See also a summary of Mōri's study in Nishikawa, "Shin Yakushiji," pp. 11-12.

[85] Mōri surmises that while the seven Yakushi images were most likely completed by 751, the remaining flanking attendants were not completed until 762 or 763. Mōri, *Shin Yakushiji kō*,

These original seven Yakushi images were damaged in a typhoon in Ōwa 2 (962) that also completely destroyed the Golden Hall.[86] This structure was never reconstructed and the present Hondō stands to the east of the original Golden Hall. The earlier function of the Hondō is not clear, although some scholars believe that it may have been an affiliated cloister (*betsuin*) which eventually took over the ritual functions of the Golden Hall in the latter half of the Heian period, and subsequently came to be known officially as the Hondō.[87]

A. Descriptive Analysis of the Image

The story behind the single plain-wood seated Yakushi image occupying the Shin Yakushiji Hondō is rather complex.[88] Today, most scholars would agree that on stylistic grounds the Yakushi dates to the late eighth or early ninth century, sometime after 780 and before 810.[89] This is consistent with my view that the seated Shichibutsu Yakushi icon type

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pp. 61-97. Details on the materials used to make the images are mentioned in *Zō Todaijishi kokusage* 造東大寺司告朔解 from Tenpyō hōji 6 and 7 (762-763), reprinted in "Shin Yakushiji," *Yamato koji taikan*, vol. 4, p. 108.

[86] *Tōdaiji yōroku* [*Section on "bettō"*], p. 173; *Nihon kiryaku, SZKT*, vol. 11. p. 89.

[87] For various theories concerning the original functions of the Hondō, see Shimizu, pp. 83-84. See also Nishikawa, p. 40.

[88] The dating of the Yakushi has always been a topic of great discussion among scholars and in the past three main theories were proposed: Tenpyō 17 (745), Enryaku 12 (793) and early Heian (eighth and ninth century). For a good summary of these three theories, see Kuno Takeshi, "Shin Yakushiji hondō no Yakushi nyorai ni tsuite," *Kokka* 948 (1972), reprinted in "Heian chōkukushi no kenkyū," (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1974):127-142.

[89] Nishikawa for example, compared the large head, the full, fleshy torso, the stern countenance, and fluid drapery folds of the image to that of the Tōshōdaiji Golden Hall Vairocana that dates to circa 770-780; Nishikawa, *Shin Yakushiji*, p. 39. Morse, following Nishikawa's stylistic analysis, believes that the image dates earlier than the Kōnin period

was developed around the same time. The image expresses an awe-inspiring vitality, quite contrary to the characteristic "flamboyant lavishness" of Nara period statues. It is important to note, however, that there has been a great deal of controversy in the past regarding dating and provenance, as this was not originally the temple's principal icon.[90]

The Yakushi is a *jōroku* monumental seated image (191.5 centimeters tall) of *kaya*, clearly made in the plain-wood tradition, with limited areas treated with pigment: the hair is colored with a dark blue-green, the pupils and eyebrows with black, and the lips and corners of the eyes with a cinnabar pigment. [91] However, there are also traces of gesso coating left on the tips of the chin and collar, so it may have been a polychrome image at one point.[92] The hairline forms gentle curves around the forehead and the *urna* is absent. As for the snail-shaped curls on the head, these were carved individually and then attached, though the present ones are all recent repairs.

(810-824), after the 780 fire and before the founding date of the Heian capital (794). Morse, "The Plain-Wood Style," p. 217; Donald F. McCallum, *The Evolution of the Buddha and Bodhisattva Figures in Japanese Sculpture of the Ninth-Century and Tenth-Century* (Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1973), 54. McCallum believes that the Shin Yakushiji image doesn't relate to any extant Nara period image. I would incline to agree with his view. McCallum gives a circa 800 date to the statue.

[90] For a comprehensive overview of its historiography, see Nishikawa, *Shin Yakushiji*, pp. 32-42.

[91] Nishikawa states that based on restorations conducted by the Bunkachō in December 1975, the Shin Yakushiji Yakushi may be the earliest example of an image made from *kaya* wood. Earlier Tenpyō images, such as the Tōshōdaiji wood group, are carved out of *hinoki*. He states *kaya* has a smoother surface and tighter texture and consequently believes it became a preferred choice for *danzō* images. Tōshōdaiji lecture hall plain-wood images from the mid ninth century are also made from *kaya* wood and more recently the Kanshinji Nyoirin Kannon was found to be made from *kaya*.

[92] Nishikawa, *Shin Yakushiji*, p. 36.

Until restorations were made on the image in 1975, scholars believed that it was sculpted in the single-block technique (*ichiboku zukuri*), but upon reexamining the statue, they discovered that in addition to the head and main body portion, twenty-four separate pieces of wood were utilized, all from the same log. Moreover, with the exception of part of the left hand, all of these separate pieces were joined to the main block of wood so as to show vertical grain, thereby giving the impression of a single-block construction. Hollow areas (*uchiguri*) were made in three sections of the image: the back of the head, back of the body, and bottom.[93]

The image sits in the lotus position (*kekka fuza*), with the left leg crossed over the right. Its commanding presence is achieved by the large head, and extremely large hands and feet in proportion to the body, as well as the wide chest that protudes out in great confidence. Viewed from the side, the Yakushi is extremely solid and thick-set, reaching 75 centimeters in depth. The right hand is tilted slightly over to the right with palm facing outward towards the viewer, all five fingers outstretched, while the lower left arm rests on the left leg and the palm holds a medicine jar, a restoration. The face, an especially striking aspect of the statue, has long, thick, arched eyebrows, a firm nose with prominent nostrils, and extremely large eyes that gaze downward rather than far into the distance. Nestled between a pair of very full and fleshy cheeks are pouting lips; the upper lip curling up to give a determined expression. The neck is thick, and the three neck lines are precisely represented. The stern, confident manner the face expresses gives the entire statue a strong sense of energy and tension, which attempts "to express a spiritual state quite different than

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[93] Ibid., pp. 34-35. See also Morse, "The Plain-Wood Style," pp. 210-212.

that exemplified in the Saidai-ji and Horyū-ji groups and … one must search for the spiritual basis in the new religious and cultural developments at the beginning of the Heian period."[94]

The hard, taut materiality of *kaya* wood allows for the chisel work to be deeper and more emphatic, resulting in drapery folds that are executed in a fluid, flowing manner. The hem of the robe is arranged in a wave-like pattern that flutters over the broad chest, similar to that of the Tōshōdaiji Golden Hall Vairocana, continuing to flow in a somewhat schematic manner over the left leg where the artist employed both the *honpashiki* 翻波式 (large wave-like curves and smaller, rigid curves alternating to form a rolling-wave pattern) and *chashaku* 茶杓(folds made from wood gouged out in a shape of a tea-scoop) patterns.[95] The *honpashiki* pattern can be found on the folds by the right knee area.

The Mandorla

Let us now turn to the mandorla, which is what made scholars categorize the image as a Shichibutsu Yakushi. It is not made from *kaya*, but of *hinoki,* with a layer of lacquer and gold leaf that was applied during the Edo period. The mandorla is double haloed (*nijū ensōkō* 二重円相光), consisting of the head halo (*zukōbu* 頭光部) representing the aura of light that encircles the head area and the body halo, surrounding the torso. From the bottom of the body, thick stems of the tree of paradise (*hōsōgeju* 宝相華樹) sprout upward to adorn the *shūenbu* (the section outside the center), forming an elaborate and dynamic pattern of interweaving leaves and *karakusamon* 唐草文 (arabesque pattern) around the Buddha.

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94 McCallum, "The Evolution of the Buddha and Bodhisattva Figures," p. 54.

95 Morse, "The Plain-Wood Style," p. 217; Nishikawa, *Shin Yakushiji*, p. 39.

There is a total of six small Buddha images (two on the top section, four on the bottom portion of the mandorla). These six Buddhas are more or less identical, each about 40 centimeters tall, made from *hinoki* wood in the *ichiboku zukuri* technique. With the exception of one, all the other Buddhas have a tiny hole dug into the top of the cranial protruberance into which several relic grains were deposited and then covered with a kind of incense powder.[96] This brings to mind the following passage from the *Shichibutsu Yakushi kyō*: "...They should place Buddha relics before the images, and they should perform the various puja offerings in the manner described previously, worshipping and generously bestowing [objects in offering]
"皆於像身安佛舍利於此像前." [97] The presence of relic grains embedded in the Medicine Buddhas provides strong evidence that the statue was conceived as a Shichibutsu Yakushi in accordance to the Yijing text.

The pedestal (parts of which have been repaired) is represented as a Mt. Sumeru throne (*senjigata shumisenza*) consisting of an upper frame (*uwakamachi*), supporting lotus petals (*ukebana* 受花), *koshi* 腰, reverse double-petal lotus flowers (*fukushiben tsuki kaeribana* 復子弁付返花), and a two-layered lower frame (*shitakamachi*). The pedestal is also referred to as the *mokakeza* 裳懸座, due to the drapery overhang, which is rendered as a separate piece of material that the image is seated on and is believed to be a later period restoration, most

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[96] Shimizu, *Shin Yakushiji*, p. 92; Nishikawa, *Shin Yakushiji*, p. 38.

[97] Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha*, p. 214; *T* 14, no. 451, p. 417.

likely made in the likeness of the original.[98] Interestingly, the *honzon* of Tōji's Golden Hall was a seated Yakushi on a *mokakeza*, further strengthening my view that this particular iconographical representation was developed in the late eighth to early ninth century.[99]

Zōnai nōnyūhin

Another remarkable aspect of the Shin Yakushiji Yakushi, helping to date it to the ninth century, is the *zōnai nōnyūhin* 像内納入品(sacred objects deposited inside the statue) consisting of eight fascicles of the Lotus Sutra deposited inside a cedar case, implanted approximately 30 centimeters from the bottom of the hollowed body cavity.[100] There is some controversy as to whether the scrolls were deposited at the time the image was made or added later,[101] but the presence of white and red ink notations on the scrolls (*hakuten* 白点 and *shuten* 朱点, usually employed in the early Heian period, indicates that they were made before the Kōnin period (810-823) and it is certainly plausible that they were deposited at the time the image was made and provides a strong case for the early Heian dating of the image.[102]

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[98] Shimizu, Shin Yakushiji, p. 92. Other images with similar pedestals include the Hōryuji Kondō Shaka from the Asuka period, Taimadera Kondō Miroku, Yakushiji Kondō Yakushi from the Nara period and Kōryuji Kōdō Amida, Daigoji Kamiyakushidō Yakushi and Rokuharamitsuji Yakushi from the Heian period.

[99] Nagaoka Ryūsaku,"Sanji no reizō," p. 21.

[100] Shimizu, *Shin Yakushiji*, p. 94

[101] See Nishikawa, *Shin Yakushiji*, p. 38; Tanabe Saburōsuke, "Zōnai nōnyuhin 1," *Bunkazai bekkan* I, p. 33.

[102] Nishikawa, *Shin Yakushiji*, p. 38.

B. Shin Yakushiji Hondō Yakushi and Associated Rituals

If the present seated Yakushi was not the principal icon of the original Shin Yakushiji Golden Hall, then where was the image enshrined originally and for what purposes? A clue to the Yakushi's original function lies in the unique structure of the Hondō, a hall dated to the Nara period (710-794).[103] Today, the Yakushi rests on a circular earthen mound in the inner sanctuary of this main hall, which is believed to be a mound made when the Hondō was erected.[104] According to Nishikawa, *Zō Tōdaiji kokusakuge* of Tenpyō hōji 6 (762) notes the presence of a *dansho* 壇所 (literally, a place equipped with a ritual altar) and an esoteric hall (*dan'in* 壇院); he surmises that this was where esoteric rituals, such as mystic incantations (*dhāraṇī* 陀羅尼) were recited.[105] Because the architectural details of the inner sanctuary are unconventional, Nishikawa suggests that the *dansho* at Shin Yakushiji gradually developed into a more permanent structure to incorporate the earthen ritual platform.[106]

Nishikawa defines a *dansho* as basically any space, whether inside the precincts of a temple, palace, the private home of an aristocrat, or temporary hall, where esoteric rituals

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[103] Shimizu, *Shin Yakushiji*, p. 84.

[104] Mizuno Keizaburo and Yamazaki Kazuo, *Shin Yakushiji*, p. 42.

[105] Nishikawa, *Shin Yakushiji*, pp. 13-14.

[106] Ibid., p. 40.

were practiced.[107] The ritual function of *danpō* is noted in the second fascicle of *Daranishūkyō* (translated by Atigupta 阿地瞿多 of Tang, 645-655), which was known in Japan as early as 737 and was commonly utilized in the late Nara period.[108] This scripture relates the merits of Yakushi *dhāraṇī* spells, and instructs followers to purify the site by taking pure soil, packing it and leveling it, and then making a circular mound with cow dung and incense. The ritual text further instructs followers to erect a Medicine Buddha image in the center of this mound.

While Nishikawa's theory is widely accepted, it is still not clear when the *dansho* later became the Hondō. Shimizu suggests that based on a Tenpyō hōji 6 (762) reference to a Shin Yakushiji *dansho* in *Zō Todaiji kokusakuge*, we can presume that the Hondō was in existence by that time.[109] He tries to show that the Shin Yakushiji image was made by 762, hence offering a very early (Nara period) dating of the image while Nishikawa remains hesitant to do so since stylistic analysis has suggested a much later dating. Nishikawa nevertheless also gives a rather early dating for the image, around Hōki 11 (781).[110] What we can say with more certainty is that though the present Yakushi was not the original principal icon of Shin Yakushiji, it was made in the early Heian period at Shin Yakushiji and enshrined in the Hondō for esoteric rituals that involved setting the image on an earthen mound and invoking *dhāraṇī* spells.

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[107] Ibid., p. 13. *Daranishūkyō* 陀羅尼集経, *T* 18, no. 901.

[108] Ishida Mōsaku 石田茂作, *Shakkyō yori mitaru Narachō bukkyō no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Tōyō Bunkō, 1930; reprint, Tokyo: Hara Shobō, 1982).

[109] Shimizu, *Shin Yakushiji,* p. 87.

[110] Nishikawa, *Shin Yakushiji*, p. 14.

The *Shichibutsu Yakushikyō* has a section that prescribes the powers of upholding and chanting the *dhāraṇī* of the Seven Medicine Buddhas. In the section "The Mystic Formula of the Seven Buddhas," the bodhisattva Manjusri circumambulates the seven Medicine Buddhas seven times and after bowing down before their feet, lauds the Buddhas with praise and urges them to reveal the spiritual formula by which sentient beings could be saved from their woes and troubles. The Buddhas respond by teaching Manjusri a great *dhāraṇī*, "Lapis Lazuli Radiance Force of the Samadhi of the Tathāgatas." They proceed to recite this *dhāraṇī* in unison, after which "an all-pervading light appeared, the great earth shook and trembled, and various divine transformations appeared all at once. All in the great assembly saw these events and each according to his capacity offered to those Buddhas flowers of heavenly fragrances, perfumed unguents, and powdered incense. They chanted together words of praise and circumambulated the Buddhas to the right seven times."[111] The Shin Yakushiji Yakushi and its association to *dansho* demonstrate that the seated Shichibutsu Yakushi icon type was clearly intended to function in a type of esoteric ritual where the invocation of *dhāraṇī* promised worldly benefits.

To reiterate, the seated Shichibutsu Yakushi icon type is found across sectarian affiliations, as we have seen with the original Tōji Golden Hall Yakushi. In the case of Kuroishidera, their *engi* states that the temple was established in Tenpyō 1 (729) by the Nara period priest Gyōki 行基 (668-749), and later revived by Ennin in Daidō 2 (807).[112] The

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[111] Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha*, pp. 210-211.

[112] Fujinami Yōkō 藤波洋香, "Kuroishidera no Yakushi nyorai," *Daihōrin* 51, no.12 (1984): 106.

reference to Gyōki and the Heian period Tendai esoteric master Ennin is most likely a fictional story intended to add a quality of sanctity and prestige to this remote temple (as was the case with many temples all over Japan). However, the reference to Ennin suggests that during the Heian period, the temple was most likely associated with the Tendai sect. The early temple history of Shōjōji is not clear but most scholars agree that it was closely related to, if not made under the supervision of, the Hossō sect monk Tokuichi 徳一 (767/781? – 842?).[113]

Given that the Shichibutsu Yakushi iconic type was made at temples with varying religious affiliations, it would be difficult to associate a specific ritual to it, though the Shin Yakushiji image, with its ties to *danpō*, gives us some idea how these Yakushi images were worshipped in relation to ritual practices. As we have seen in chapter three, many of these images were also used in Yakushi *keka* rituals, including the Shin Yakushiji Yakushi.[114]

6. Summary

Certain conclusions can be drawn from the preceding analysis of the ninth century seated Shichibutsu Yakushi icon type. First, it was most likely developed during the transitional period from late Nara to early Heian. Though the original mandorla of the Yakushiji Yakushi did not survive, written sources indicate that it was adorned with seven Medicine Buddhas, however, the restored Edo period version represents seven Buddhas of the Past, rather than Medicine Buddhas. If we take the written sources at face value, it would

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[113] Satō Akio, "Shōjōji Yakushi Sanzonzō Kō," *Bijutsushi* 21(1956): 2. The temple legend also ascribes the founder of the Shingon sect, Kūkai, as the other founder.

[114] Details of *keka* rituals are discussed in chapter 3.

mean that this iconic type was developed in the first quarter of the eighth century. Without doubt this iconography was partially inspired by canonical sources, though it is uncertain whether it was based on Xuanzang or Yijing's translation, since both sutras promote the creation of seven Medicine Buddha images, the former advocating making seven of Bhaiṣyaja-guru, while the latter suggesting making seven different Medicine Buddha images which included Bhaiṣyaja-guru.

The small early ninth century Shōjiji image on the other hand, demonstrates a further elaboration of this Shichibutsu Yakushi iconography, since it represents not only the seven Medicine Buddhas on the top portion of the mandorla, but the Twelve Divine Generals in the lower portion. Though there are earlier examples of this iconography with the Kōfukuin and Tōshōdaiji seated Yakushi as recorded in written sources, I believe that the more likely prototype for the Shōjiji image was Tōji's original Golden Hall Yakushi, since the ornamentation of esoteric *kongōsho* (Skt.vajra) demonstrates an esoteric affiliation.

As attested by a number of early Heian Yakushi images from Shōjiji, Shōjōji, and Kuroishidera, in regions stretching from Kyoto all the way to Fukushima, this was indeed a popular icon type adopted in temples of various affiliations that enshrined Yakushi as principal icon. A closer examination of the Shin Yakushiji image, as well as documentary sources demonstrates that Heian Yakushi images were used in specific ritual practices. These included Buddhist repentance rites known as Yakushi *keka* and *danpō*, where an image of Yakushi was worshipped on a sacred altar accompanied by a chanting of *dhāraṇī* invocations.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Magnificent Seven: The Esoteric Rite of the Seven Medicine Buddhas

1. Introduction

The large number of extant wooden statues of Yakushi (the Medicine Buddha) from all regions of Japan dated to the Heian period indicates the widespread worship of this deity during those centuries. Kokōkaku 己高閣, a treasure house built to store and display Buddhist statues salvaged from three defunct temples at Mt. Kodakami of Shiga prefecture, enshrines a late eighth century standing Yakushi image, believed to have been the principal icon of a nearby temple Keisokuji 鶏足寺: this is one of the earliest and finest examples of early Heian Buddhist sculpture.[1]

This building also displays a set of seven standing Yakushi images dated to the early thirteenth century that are relatively unknown and normally excluded from the general discussion of Japanese Buddhist art history. The seven statues are all about 90 centimeters tall, wearing robes covering both shoulders, their right arms raised in the gesture of "fear-not" while their left hands are extended slightly forward in the gesture of "wish-granting," holding a medicine jar in their palms; this is a standard iconography of Medicine Buddha images in Japan.[2]

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[1] Art historical sources typically refer to the Yakushi as the Keisokuji Yakushi, but the image was actually the main icon for a temple known as Hokkeji, a *betsuin* 別院 of Keisokuji in the Mt. Kokō area. See Uno Shigeki, *Ōmiji no chōzō* (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1974), 135.

[2] Kuno, *Butsuzō shūsei,* vol. 4, pl. 386.

Matsumushidera 松虫寺 in present day Chiba prefecture has a similar set of seven Medicine Buddhas dated to the twelfth century, though they are slightly smaller than the Keisokuji set.[3] The central figure is seated and larger than the remaining six standing images. The Keisokuji and Matsumushidera Yakushi deserves more careful attention since these are the only two extant images where the Medicine Buddha is represented as seven individual and separate entities, known as Shichibutsu Yakushi. What is the significance of representing the Medicine Buddha as a set of seven? Were they used for specific rituals and if so, how did they differ from representing the Medicine Buddha as a singular entity? What more can be said about these two sets of Shichibutsu Yakushi?

Although the Matsumushidera and Keisokuji Shichibutsu Yakushi are not regarded as masterpieces of Heian and Kamakura Buddhist art and even though there is little information regarding their provenance, they are in fact invaluable objects conveying a rather specific story and were obviously meant for ritual usage in one of the most important Tendai esoteric rituals during the late Heian and Kamakura period -- the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* (The Ritual of the Seven Medicine Master Buddhas).

In this chapter, I undertake to unravel the religious and cultural meanings embodied in the Keisokuji and Matsumushidera Shichibutsu Yakushi. Another related purpose is to provide a ritual context for the images. A standard and acceptable methodology for doing this would be to study the social, cultural and religious histories surrounding the two sets of artifacts. Unfortunately, there is little information in regard to Keisokuji and Matsumushidera's provenance that can provide any direct insights, necessitating the use to

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[3] Ibid., vol. 1, pl. 201.

more unconventional strategies. The Keisokuji and Matsumushidera Shichibutsu Yakushi must be regarded as visual and material testimonies of iconographical and ritual programs that were once popular and common. Their survival allows the lost Shichibutsu Yakushi images, their sumptuous halls where they were once enshrined, and their elaborate esoteric rituals to be restored from obsoleteness.

Attempts to discuss esoteric images, by the very fact that they were part and parcel of esoteric rituals raises the question of how one can intelligently study a tradition which consciously and deliberately attempts to hide its teachings from outsiders. Even if one manages to learn something about this secret tradition, there is an inherent ethical problem of relating this knowledge to an uninitiated audience. To put it in Hugh B. Urban's words, "If one "knows" one cannot speak; if one speaks, one must not really know."[4] Borrowing Pierre Bourdieu's concept of "symbolic capital," Urban offers both theoretical and practical alternatives to these two problems by arguing that, there is a need to make a theoretical shift in one's approach to esotericism. He argues that studying the content of esotericism is ultimately unknowable, and when it is, it is not readily translatable; thus, one should study:

> ...the tactics by which social agents conceal and reveal, hoard, [and] exchange certain valued information. In this sense, secrecy is a discursive strategy that transforms a given piece of knowledge into a scarce and precious resource, a valuable commodity, the possession of which in turn bestows status, prestige, or symbolic capital on its owner.[5]

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[4] Hugh B. Urban, "The Torment of Secrecy: Ethical and Epistemological Problems in the Study of Esoteric Traditions," *History of Religions* 37, no. 3 (1998): 210.

[5] Ibid., p. 210.

This is also similar to the Foucaultian approach to power and the strategies by which it is manifested, rather than looking at power as an oppressive force imposed "top down" in a political hierarchy.[6] Urban suggests that we study esotericism this way, by turning away from the hidden content and to examine how a given body of information is endowed with secrecy, how and in what contexts the power relations are exchanged and how the possession of this secret information affect the status of the person who possesses this secret.[7]

2. The Seven Medicine Masters of the Konpon chūdō

The iconographical and ritual lineage of the surviving Shichibutsu Yakushi can be traced back to mid ninth century Enryakuji, the headquarters of the *sanmon* Tendai school, where the first esoteric Shichibutsu Yakushi images were made and enshrined in the Konpon chūdō, as secret icons. As we have seen in chapter two, Konpon chūdō was a worship hall established by Saichō at Enryakuji, dedicated to the Medicine Buddha, and it was one of the most important ritual centers at the Eastern Pagoda area of the temple complex. There were all together ten ninth century Yakushi images enshrined there, the most important being the standing Yakushi image purportedly carved by Saichō himself. There was also a set of Shichibutsu Yakushi.[8] The religious and cultural significance of the Matsumushidera and

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[6] Urban, "The Torment of Secrecy," pp. 218-219.

[7] Ibid., 219.

[8] The remaining two Yakushi were also standing images, one donated by Ōtomo Sukune Kunimichi and made under the supervision of Anne, and the other vowed by Yuishu who commissioned the Yakushi in Jōgan 1 (859).

Keisokuji images becomes apparent when we consider that these images were ritually and iconographically associated to the Enryakuji Shichibutsu Yakushi images in the Konpon chūdō, which I argue is the first esoteric Shichibutsu Yakushi images conceived as a set of seven, based on Yijing's sutra rather than Xuanzang's.

According to the *Sanmon dōshaki*, the Buddhas from the Shichibutsu Yakushi set were all 2 *shaku* high (60.6 cm).[9] The text also refers to them as sandalwood images, so they were probably finished in the plain-wood style without any elaborate polychromy.[10] Each Yakushi image supposedly contained a tiny Yakushi image, 3 *sun* high (approx. 9 cm) made by the Tang esoteric master Faquan 法全 from Xuanfasi 玄法寺.[11]

It is unclear who the donor was for the images. Though some textual sources point to Enchin, fifth Enryakuji abbot (814-891) as the likely candidate, other sources claim that it was not known.[12] Shimizu Zenzō surmises that the Shichibutsu Yakushi set existed by Jōgan 10 (868), the year when Enchin became abbot of Enryakuji.[13]

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[9] *Sanmon dōshaki*, *GR* 24, no. 438.

[10] *Sanmon dōshaki*, *GR* 24, p. 469a. (根本中堂) 条：同佛像七軀。立高各二尺。竝檀像。本願主不知誰人.“Concerning the *Konpon chūdō*: There are seven Buddha of the same Buddha statues. They stand, each being 2 shaku tall, and are sandalwood images. It is not known who vowed for the images.” *Kuin bukkakushō*: 同七軀。立像．高各二尺。置壇帳内安之。願主不分明 . *GR* 24, p. 570b. “There are seven of the same (Buddha) standing statues. They are each 2 shaku high, and are enshrined on altars within the curtains.”

[11] Ennin studied under the guidance of Faquan at Xuanfasi. *Eigaku yōki* in *GR* 24, p. 510a. Mōri, “Konpon chūdō to anchi butsuzō,”p., 93; Shimizu, “Tendai no Yakushi butsu,” p. 365; Shimizu, “Tendai bijutsu no tenkai,”p., 265.

[12] *Sanmon dōshaki* and *Kuin bukkakushō* say it was Enchin who pledged the Shichibutsu Yakushi. *Eigaku yōki* and *Bukkakushō* however, report that the person who made the pledge

A diagram in the *Kuin bukkakushō* shows the main altar in the Konpon chūdō displaying all of the ten Yakushi images.[14] In the diagram, the Shichibutsu Yakushi are displayed to the right of Saichō's Yakushi, within the inner sanctuary (内陣 *naijin*), the most sacred section of the worship hall. The other two standing Yakushi are positioned outside the hanging blinds with other flanking deities. The Shichibutsu Yakushi, enshrined within the *naijin*, indicates that they were, together with Saichō's image, the *honzon* for the Konpon chūdō (at least by the time Jichin 慈鎮 was Enryakuji's abbot in 1192.[15]

Reconstruction of Shichibutsu Yakushi statues or any of the original Yakushi enshrined in the Konpon chūdō is a tricky endeavor, since none of the images have survived the devastating fire of Genki 2 (1571). Though the Konpon chūdō Shichibutsu Yakushi are forever lost and the only information we have of the images, pieced together from existing documentary sources, give us only a fragmentary composite, the Matsumushidera and Keisokuji sets provide us with some generalized idea of what the Enryakuji Konpon chūdō Yakushi were like.

In the previous chapter, I explored the seated Shichibutsu Yakushi icon type and discussed the popularity of Yijing's 707 text *Yakushi rurikō nyorai hongan kudokukyō* (Scripture

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for the images were unknown. *Sanmon dōshaki,* in *GR* 24, p. 469a; *Kuin bukkakushō,* in *GR* 24, p. 570b.

[13] Shimizu, *Heian chōkokushi*, p. 95.

[14] *Kuin bukkakushō,* in *GR* 24, p. 572.

[15] Mōri, "Genki izen no konpon chūdō," pp. 95-96. Jichin is also known as Jien (1155-1225, who became Enryakuji abbot in 1192).

on the Merits of the Fundamental Vows of the Seven Buddhas of Lapis Lazuli Radiance, the Medicine Masters). This text was known among Buddhist ecclesiastics in the mid eighth century, indicating that worship of Shichibutsu Yakushi already existed by that time. However, the practice of making seven Yakushi icons as a set and using them as the centerpiece of an elaborate esoteric ceremony was a new development which took place within the Tendai tradition, and historical sources point to the ninth century as the point of inception, becoming a frequent practice among the aristocracy by the late Heian period.

3. Esoteric Rituals, Specialists and Patrons

Shichibutsu Yakushi hō became a frequently practiced Tendai esoteric ritual from the tenth century, denoting changes in the nature of rituals performed by Buddhist ecclesiastics for the court. We have seen in previous chapters that during the early Heian period, official Buddhist rituals consisted of *keka*, performed for both the protection of the state and the tennō. As with the Nara period, the ninth century was characterized by the strengthening of the *ritsuryō* 律令 (statutory) system, with the tennō at the center. Even when rituals were performed to prevent calamities and increase worldly benefits, it was directed at the tennō, who represented the entire country. In the first half of the ninth century, Saichō and Kūkai were two key people who brought about innovative changes in ritual practices, particularly Kūkai, with his introduction of a new type of esoteric Buddhist discourse. These rituals gradually came to replace other kinds of exoteric rites sponsored by the court for *chingo kokka* purposes.

Particularly noteworthy in the 830s was *tendoku* 転読 (chanting and recitation of scripture), particularly the Golden Illuminating Wisdom and Great Perfection of Wisdom

sutras. Sutra chanting and reading ceremonies were prevalent in the first half of the ninth century, and there are only a few isolated cases where esoteric rituals were officially performed for *chingo kokka*. For example, in Jōwa 3 (836-5-9) a Shingon'in Initiation Hall at Tōdaiji 東大寺真言院灌頂道場 was established and twenty-one monks were invited to perform an esoteric rite for the prevention of calamites and the increase of benefits. Moreover in 837, Buddhist practitioners trained in purification (*jōgyōsō*) were assembled at *kokubunji* in the five main provinces and seven highways leading to the provinces and ordered to perform the esoteric ritual dedicated to Jūichimen Kannon 十一面観音菩薩 (Eleven-headed Avalokiteśvara bodhisattva).[16]

Hayami Tasuku observes that with a few exceptions, esoteric rituals during the 830-840s were not practiced independently, but were usually incorporated into the older, traditional forms of exoteric Buddhist rituals. For example, a *keka* performed during this period often took on a strong esoteric component, when Shingon invocations replaced more traditional forms during the evening section of a *tendoku* rite. Furthermore, esoteric rituals were reserved strictly for the court and the performance of these rituals by private persons was prohibited, though often ignored.

At the beginning of the ninth century, the Tendai sect lagged behind in the esotericization of their rituals compared to the Shingon school. This prompted Ennin (793-864) to visit Tang China so that he could master and import the latest esoteric rituals and art

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[16] Mōri, "Genki izen no Konpon chūdō," pp. 17-18. See also Jōwa 3(836-5-9) entry in, *Shoku Nihon kōki*, in *KT* 3, p. 51. Jōwa 4 (837-2-2), ibid., p. 63.

objects.[17] One such ritual that Ennin brought back was the *Monju hachiji hō* 文殊八字法 which was known for its powers to avert calamities, especially epidemics. Another was the Ritual of Abundant Light (*Shijōkō hō* 熾盛光法), often performed during times when there were unusual celestial phenomena, considered to be inauspicious. Montoku tennō 文德天皇 (827-858) established the Sōji'in 総持院 at Mt. Hiei and appointed fourteen monks there to continuously perform this ritual, and Enryakuji became a place where the Ritual of Abundant Light was performed for the protection of the state and the tennō.[18]

Esoteric rituals can be seen as a strategic deployment used by dominant elite factions to reinforce their own power and status within the social hierarchy.[19] In the early Heian period, the *ritsuryō* system was still in place with the tennō forming the nucleus of the system. From the late ninth century, this system began disintegrating and as the Northern branch of the Fujiwara family rose in power, they brought about a breakdown in the system as well as the decline of rival clan families who opposed them, leading to an unstable social and political climate. Hayami argues that these vertiginous circumstances led to an increase in the private practice of secret rituals by the nobility.[20]

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[17] Ennin, one of Saichō's immediate disciples became Enryakuji's third abbot in 854. He is known posthumously as Jikaku daishi 慈覚大師.

[18] Groner, *Ryōgen and Mt. Hiei*, pp. 90-91.

[19] Urban, "Torment of Secrecy," pp. 221-222.

[20] Hayami, *Heian kizoku shakai*, p. 33.

Esoteric rituals came to provide for the personal needs of powerful nobles, despite royal edicts outlawing such practices.[21] At first, the court zealously prevented the privatization of esoteric practices, recognizing its symbolic value for reinforcing a hierarchy of power. A noteworthy example of this is provided by Hayami: Fujiwara no Tokihira revived an Enryaku 4 Council of State directive in Shōtai 4 (901), prohibiting the private performance of esoteric rituals for the purpose of harming one's enemies (this was originally passed just a month after Fujiwara no Tanetsugu's assassination and Prince Sawara's suicide).[22] The revival of this edict indicated that many aristocrats were resorting to esoteric rituals in secret.[23]

A. *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* during the Fujiwara regency

Estoeric rites were "about control and the individual possession of knowledge that others do not have, elevating the value of the thing concealed, growing desirable and giving the impression of being powerful." [24] The ruling elites were not the only social agents vying for power and control by using esoteric rituals as symbolic capital, since religious ecclesiastics also used tactics of secrecy to legitimate their own status. The *Shichibutsu Yakushi*

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[21] Ibid., p. 37.

[22] Ibid., pp. 33-35.

[23] See for example Fujiwara no Korechika clandestinely sponsoring the *Daigen hō* 太元法 (esoteric rite of the Mystic King) in William McCullough and Helen McCullough trans., *Tale of Flowering Fortunes: Annals of Japanese Aristocratic Life in the Heian Period*, vol.1 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980), 182.

[24] Urban, "Torment of Secrecy," p. 220, n. 37.

hō was one of numerous esoteric rites Tendai priests strove to develop and promote, in order to compete with their Shingon rivals for aristocratic patronage.[25] According to scripture, the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* ritually consecrated the Medicine Buddha icons into empowered entities capable of saving living beings from all kinds of calamities imaginable, including relief from diseases, difficult labor, evil curses, deformity, poisons, snakebites, imprisonment, and even untimely deaths.

Documentary evidence indicates that Ennin performed the first esoteric Shichibutsu Yakushi ritual in Kashō 3 (850) at Ninmyō tennō's private quarters (Seiryōden) to pray for his recovery from illness.[26] At that time, he used paintings of Seven Yakushi Buddhas and hung them in front of a bamboo blind while seven tiered lamps were lit in the garden.[27] The ceremony went into disuse after Ennin, and it was Ryōgen 良原 (912-985), the eighteenth Tendai abbot of Enryakuji who revived this ritual for his Fujiwara patrons. After his time, it became exclusively a rite of the Tendai *sanmon* tradition.[28]

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[25] Groner, *Ryōgen and Mount Hiei,* p. 87.

[26] One of the tennō's residential halls within the residential compound (内裏 *dairi*).

[27] *Shoku Nihon kōki,* 850-3-19 entry: 於清涼殿修七仏薬師法。画七仏像懸、七重輪燈立於庭中 "At the Seiryōden he [Ennin] performed the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō,* painted seven Buddhas images and had them hung, while in the garden seven-tiered lanters were lit."*Shoku Nihon kōki, KT* 3, p. 238. However, the *Shoku nihongi* doesn't mention Shichibutsu Yakushihō for the year 850 and instead mentions the *Monju hachijihō* 文殊八字法.

[28] *Sanmon* 山門 refers to Mt. Hiei(where Saichō-Ennin's lineage was based), as opposed to *Jimon* 寺門 which refers to Onjōji (Gishin-Enchin lineage).

In competing with Shingon rivals for the most effective esoteric ritual, Ryōgen developed *himitsu shuhō* 秘密修法 (esoteric rituals) exclusive to the Tendai tradition, allowing him to secure the support of his aristocratic patrons.[29] According to Paul Groner,

> After Ryōgen's time, it (Shichibutsu Yakushi hō) was developed into one of those special ceremonies that the Tendai school used to accentuate their differences from the Shingon tradition. Ryōgen revived a ceremony that was potentially more impressive than rituals common to both Tendai and Shingon that focused only on a single image of Yakushi.[30]

By the late Heian period, the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* came to be regarded as one of the four great Tendai esoteric rituals (四箇大法 *shika daihō*) of the Enryakuji school.[31] Ryōgen's successful revitalization of Enryakuji first took root when he met Fujiwara no Tadahira 藤原忠平(880-949) around 939. At that time, Tadahira was at the peak of his career and the most powerful man in Japan.[32] Ryōgen's relationship with the Fujiwara clan culminated with Tadahira's son Morosuke 師輔 (908-960), who remained his primary patron until Morosuke's death in 960. This was the beginning of Enryakuji's close ties to the court and Fujiwara

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[29] Hayami, *Heian kizoku shakai,* pp. 72, 92-94.

[30] Groner, *Ryōgen and Mount Hiei*, p. 88.

[31] The four great rituals of the Sanmon school are: *Anchin hō* 安鎮法 *Shijōkō hō* 熾盛光法, *Fugen enmei hō* 普賢延命法 and *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* 七佛薬師法. On the other hand, the four great rituals for the Shingon school were: *Niōkyō hō* 仁王経法, *Jōukyō hō* 請雨経法, *Kujakukyō hō* 孔雀経法, *Shugokokkaikyō hō* 守護国会経法.

[32] Groner, *Ryōgen and Mount Hiei*, p. 67. Tadahira was chiefly responsible for developing the Fujiwara regency infrastructure that enabled the Northern branch of the Fujiwara family to dominate Japanese court politics, and to restrict the power of the imperial family.

leaders, whose patronage allowed the temple to become one of the most influential religious temples in the late Heian and Kamakura eras, cooperating with and often challenging the secular elites.[33]

Ryōgen first performed the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* in 957 at Enryakuji's Konpon chūdō for Morosuke's principal wife, Kōshi 康子 (also known as Yasuko) to pray for her safe childbirth.[34] Though Kōshi died during childbirth two years later, the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* Ryōgen performed on this day turned out to be a real success. Among the numerous benefits, *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* was particularly known for its efficacy on safe childbirth and this is clearly mentioned in both the *Yakushi kyō* and *Shichibutsu Yakushi kyō*:

> If there is a woman about to give birth who suffers from acute pain, and if she is able with utmost sincerity to call out the names, worship, and praise, and reverently offer *pūjā* to the Seven Buddhas, tathāgatas, then all her suffering will be removed. The appearance of her child will be perfect, and all who see him will exclaim with joy. The child will be endowed with keen sense-organs, intelligence, few illnesses, and tranquility. Non-human beings will never snatch away the vital spirit of such a child."[35]

Another charismatic court politician, Fujiwara no Michinaga (966-1027), commissioned Yakushi images and sponsored Shichibutsu Yakushi rituals in 1008 and 1009

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[33] For the political power Enryakuji exerted during the Heian and Kamakura periods, see Mikael S. Adolphson, *The Gates of Power: Monks, Courtiers and Warriors in Premodern Japan* (Honolulu, University of Hawai'i Press, 2000)

[34] Groner, *Ryōgen and Mount Hiei,* pp. 87-88. Princess Kōshi was the younger sister of Suzaku and Murakami tennō and the fourteenth daughter of Daigo tennō.

[35] Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha*, p. 202.

for his daughter Shōshi 彰子 (988-1074), who was the royal consort to Ichijō tennō 一条天皇 (980-1011).[36] The frequency of this ritual performed for the purpose of ensuring safe childbirth can be found in the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō genkōki* 七佛薬師法現行記 a record from a slightly later period.[37] In it, eighteen of the forty-one *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* recorded were performed to ensure a safe delivery. The reason why this particular section of the sutra was emphasized becomes apparent when we examine the Fujiwara regental political system. In order to secure the regency, the Fujiwara nobles practiced marital politics by placing their daughters into the tennō's harem. The birth of a healthy baby boy (the potential heir to the throne) was one crucial political strategy that allowed the Fujiwara nobles to reinforce their authority.[38] Influential religious institutions such as Enryakuji, in turn provided spiritual protection as caretakers of the temples owned by the courtly elites, offering ritual and iconographical consultations. Esoteric rituals and images were regarded as particularly beneficial for both groups.

B. Fujiwara no Michinaga's (966-1027) Yakushi worship

The culmination of the Fujiwara Northern branch's power at court is well-exemplified by the illustrious Fujiwara no Michinaga, a talented politician who was able to

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36 *Midō kampakuki* (Kankō 55)1008-7-14, 1008-8-2 and (Kankō 6)1009-10-13. *Midō kampakuki* in *DNK* 1, no.1 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1952), 263-264, and vol. 1, no.2 (1953), 24.

37 *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō Genkōki,* in *GR* 26, no.1, This document contains Shichibutsu Yakushi rituals performed between Hōen 3 (1137) to Kannō 1 (1350), taken from the *Monyōki.*

38 Nishio,*Yakushi shinkō,* p. 81.

dominate the monarchy through marital ties, marrying several of his daughters to reigning tennōs. During Michinaga's resplendent career, he constructed many temples and sponsored numerous religious rituals for his and his immediate family's benefit. The relative abundance of written sources on Michinaga's career allows us to observe some of the religious practices of the ruling elites, particularly their attitudes towards image veneration and ritual during the latter half of the Heian period.

As mentioned earlier, the primary goal of sponsoring esoteric Shichibutsu Yakushi rituals by the Fujiwara nobility during this time was to ensure safe delivery of a healthy baby, a benefit singled out among numerous blessings bestowed by Yakushi in the scriptures. Michinaga's personal belief in Yakushi is made evident by the construction of an elaborate Yakushi hall (Yakushidō) at his Hōjōji 法成寺 temple complex.

Michinaga's Hōjōji and Yakushi hall

In 1024, Michinaga held a grand dedication ceremony for his Yakushi hall at Hōjōji, his private temple that was located on the banks of the Kamo River in Kyoto. Michinaga began construction of Hōjōji in Kannin 3 (1019-7), the same year he took the tonsure. In Kannin 4 (1020-3-22) the Amida hall housing nine Amida images (Kutai Amida 九体阿弥陀) along with Seishi 勢至 and Kannon 観音 bodhisattva images were completed, and named Muryōju'in 無量寿院. In the same year the Jissaidō 十斎堂, a hall enshrined the Buddhas of the Ten Days of Purification was completed, along with the bellhouse and the sutra repository. In the following year (1021), the lecture hall was completed. His wife, Minamoto Rinshi 源倫子 dedicated a subtemple known as the Saihoku'in 西北院 which was built on the northwest corner of the temple complex. In Jian 2 (1022-7-14), a dedication

ceremony was performed for the completed Golden Hall and the Godai Hall 五大堂 and the temple was renamed Hōjōji. In Manju 1 (1024-3) the Yakushidō was completed.

From about 1018 until his death in 1027, Michinaga endured serious health problems, which was one contributing factor for his ardent commitment in building the Hōjōji complex and its statuary, as well as his increased interest in Amida and Pure Land practices.[39] As Cameron G. Hurst III proposes, Michinaga suffered from severe chest pains and blindness, which was brought on by his diabetes.[40] The temple, particularly the Muryōju'in that Michinaga frequented for prayer offerings, was thus a sacred space to prepare for his death and also a place that promised rebirth in Amida's Western Pure Land.

Nishio Masahito suggests that restoration of his health was not the main objective behind Michinaga's construction of the sumptuous Yakushi hall and its monumental statuary. He observes that after experiencing several attacks of severe chest pains in 1019, Michinaga sponsored various esoteric rituals at the Godaidō, a hall dedicated to the Five Great Kings of Light and that no rituals dedicated to Yakushi were performed, indicating that Michinaga did not rely on this particular deity to cure his health problems. Nishio further suggests that Michinaga viewed Yakushi as a deity who ensured proper guidance to Amida's Western Pure Land at the end of one's life.[41] This idea can be found in the scriptures which state that those who hear the name of the Medicine Buddha would, at the

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[39] Cameron G Hurst III, "Michinaga's Maladies: A Medical Report on Fujiwara Michinaga." *MN* 34, no. 1 (1979): 110.

[40] Ibid., p. 104.

[41] Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō*, p. 88.

end of their lives, be led by eight great Bodhisattvas to Amida's Western Pure Land, where they will be reborn.[42] This is also clearly suggested in a passage from *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes* [Music chapter]:

> Furthermore, a believer who has recited Buddha-invocations in the hope of going to the Pure Land, but who fears that he many not succeed in his objective, may call on the Healing Buddha to come with the eight bodhisattvas to escort him.[43]

A closer examination of the layout of the Yakushi hall structure in relation to the Amida hall further supports Nishio's contention that Michinaga viewed Yakushi as "the spiritual guide" to Amida's Western paradise. Shimizu Hiroshi states that only two halls in the entire Hōjōji complex were given Buddhist reference names; the Amida hall, known as the Muryōju'in 無量寿院 and the Yakushi hall, known as the Jōruri'in 浄瑠璃院 which suggested the religious significance placed on them in comparison to the other halls.[44] Muryōju, meaning "Buddha of Immeasurable Life" referred specifically to Amida Buddha. Jōruri on the other hand referred to Yakushi, who was referred to as the Rurikō nyorai 琉璃光如来 (The Lapis Lazuli Radiance Tathāgata). Yakushi's residence was also known as Jōruri jōdo 浄

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[42] *T* 14, no. 450, p. 406B. *Yakushi hongan kudoku kyō* where it is written:

> If they hear the name of the Lord Master of Healing, the Lapis Lazuli Radiance Tathagata, then when they reach the end of their spiritual lives, eight great Bodhisattvas will ascend through space using their spiritual powers, and they will come to point route [to the Western Paradise]. In that [Western] realm, they will be spontaneously reborn in multi-colored jeweled flowers. Birnbaum, p. 159.

[43] McCullough and McCullough, p. 560.

[44] Shimizu Hiroshi, 清水擴, *Heian jidai bukkyō kenchikushi no kenkyū – Jōdokyō kenchiku o chūshin ni."* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1992), 43.

瑠璃浄土, the Lapis Lazuli Pure Land. A plan of the Hōjōji complex shows that the Yakushi hall and Amida hall were built on the east and west of the temple complex respectively, both facing a large lake situated between them. The two halls, placed directly across from each other were thus symbolic of Yakushi, presiding in the East, and Amida, presiding in the West, two Buddha paradises realized in this worldly realm. As Shimizu Hiroshi notes, both the Amida and Yakushi halls, in its relation to the lake and gardens situated between and around them, was a three-dimensional representation of The Realm of Pure Bliss (Jpn. *Gokuraku* 極楽, Skt. Sukhavati) in Pure Land Buddhist practice.[45]

The Tale of Flowering Fortunes describes the splendor of the Hōjōji complex, conceived as the physical manifestation of the Realm of Bliss: "As the number of halls at the Hōjōji increased, people began to feel that the Pure Land must present a very similar appearance."[46] Some people even moved their houses to the north and south of the Hōjōji complex, just to that they could "be close enough to that earthly paradise to see the buddhas morning and evening during the short time remaining to them."[47]

One of the structural innovations of the multiple buildings at Hōjōji, including the Amida and Yakushi halls, was its elongated hall and galleries (*chōdō keishiki* 長堂形式).[48] The elongated hall's architectural form was born out of the necessity in finding a suitable

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[45] Shimizu, *Bukkyō kenchikushi*, p. 65.

[46] McCullough and McCullough, *Flowering Fortunes,* p. 564.

[47] Mimi Hall Yiengpruksawan, "The Phoenix Hall at Uji and the Symmetries of Replication," *Art Bulletin* vol. 77, no. 4 (1995): 651; McCullough and McCullough, p. 571.

[48] Yiengpruksawan, "The Phoenix Hall," p. 652.

space to enshrine multiple *honzon* of the halls.[49] With the exception of the Golden Hall, the Amida, Yakushi, Shaka and Jissaidō all had multiple monumental statues of Amida, Yakushi, Shaka and Jissaibutsu respectively. Shimizu explains that the elongated hall allowed for the display of each of the *honzon* in a single line, thereby allowing the deities in their multiple forms to be displayed in equal status to each other.[50] Hōjōji's Nine Amida Buddhas enshrined side by side, was the first of its kind and inspired other patrons to do the same, especially the retired tennōs.[51]

Though it is certainly plausible that Yakushi was worshipped for his ability to guide the faithful to Amida's Pure Land after the end of one's life, it is hard to believe that this would be the main reason behind Michinaga's faith in Yakushi, given the deity's known powers. In fact, I believe that, given Michinaga's ailing health, he dared not exclude any deity from his zealous attention. As for Yakushi, there are indications that Michinaga held faith in him until the very end, in the hopes of prolonging life. As Hurst's research has revealed, Michinaga's health problems only began from around 1018, steadily worsening as the years progressed. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes* observes that Michinaga had been planning to build a Yakushi hall from around 1022, just when his health was steadily declining.[52] This plan,

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[49] For a plan of the Hōjōji complex, see Fukuyama Toshio, *Heian Temples: Byōdō-in and Chūsonji*, (New York: Weatherhill, 1976), 47.

[50] Shimizu Hiroshi, *Bukkyō kenchikushi,* p. 59.

[51] For example, the kutai Amida statues at Jōruriji. Today, the Jōruriji kutai Amida 浄瑠璃寺九体阿弥陀 is the only extant example from the Heian period.

[52] McCullough and McCullough, *Flowering Fortunes,* vol. 2, p. 579.

realized two years after the dedication of the Amida Hall, thus illustrates Michinaga's desperate appeals to the Medicine Buddha as a last resort after earlier futile attempts in turning to other deities. Though Nishio states that there are no records of Michinaga worshipping Yakushi for purposes of removing disease and prolonging life, the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō daidainikki* 七仏薬師法代々日記 in fact mentions that Michinaga requested the Mudōji abbot Keimyō 慶命 to perform a Shichibutsu Yakushi ritual in Manju 4 (1027-2), just ten months before Michinaga's passing.[53]

Thus, what I see here in regard to Michinaga's faith in Yakushi is a certain pattern of faith, that is, an eclectic one which was fairly typical of Heian Japanese worship (at least among the aristocracy). To reiterate, faith was deeply rooted in the religious concept of *genze riyaku*, a belief system resting on the primary idea that spiritual and material benefits can be attained in this world through numerous ritual practices.[54]

This explains why a great variety of esoteric rites were practiced by Michinaga for curing illness instead of exclusively employing the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō*. Court nobles in the late tenth and eleventh centuries practiced all kinds of rituals for their well-being. Hayami Tasuku categorized these into two main types: first were rituals for quelling evil influences (*jōbuku hō* 調伏法, *gōbuku hō* 降伏法), exemplified by the rites dedicated to Fudō myōō 不動明王, the Immovable Light King (Skt. Acalanātha); second were rituals performed for the

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[53] Hayami, *Heian kizoku shakai*, p. 92, 102, n. 85. Keimyō (965-1038) became the 27th Tendai abbot in 1028.

[54] Reader and Tanabe, *Practically Religious*, p. 14.

prevention of calamities and the increase of worldly benefits (*sokusai zōeki* 息災増益); the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* fell into the latter category.[55]

As political conflicts between nobles vying for power increased, so did their concerns for vengeful spirits and political rivals who plotted against them. In a time when Michinaga and his immediate faction members dominated court politics, it was believed that defeated members of rival factions became vengeful spirits, or practiced unsanctioned esoteric rituals privately to torment their political opponents. For example, *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes* explains that Fujiwara no Korechika (974-1010) was clandestinely sponsoring the *Daigen hō* (esoteric rite of the Mystic King), a ritual reserved exclusively for the Court where sponsorship by a private person was punishable by exile.[56] In this kind of precarious climate, one of the most popular rites that developed to counter these evil forces was the *Fudō hō* (esoteric ritual focusing on Fudō), which was typically performed as a Five-Platform Ceremony (*Godan hō* 五檀法).[57]

Disease and illness were often believed to be caused by these vengeful spirits, which may explain why the *Fudō hō* was a preferred rite over the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* for severely ill

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[55] Hayami, *Heian kizoku shakai*, pp. 92-94.

[56] Korechika was also rumored to direct evil curses on the royal consort which led to his subsequent exile.

[57] Hayami, *Heian kizoku shakai*, p. 89. The *Fudō hō*, for the purposes of expelling evil influences (*jōbuku*) was probably developed during the mid tenth century. The Five-Platform Ceremony (*Godanhō*) was developed during this time as well.

members of the court, particularly those who were politically active. Michinaga in particular, favored the Five-platform ceremony for curing his ill health.[58]

Yakushi hall

The Yakushi hall was conceived very similarly to the Amida hall. Details on the Yakushi hall and its sacred images can be extracted from several sources, including the *Tale of Flowering Fortunes*. The buildings were built lavishly with the most expensive materials. The Amida hall for example, is described as having rafter ends covered in gold, metal fittings also made of gold, mother-of-pearl inlays and gold gems on the berms (犬走り *inubashiri*) and beautiful paintings on the doors. The principal images were also surrounded by mother-of-pearl tables on which offerings were made.[59] Michinaga began conceiving of building a Yakushi hall and adorning it with statues for the Yakushi hall from around 1022, and it was finally dedicated in 1024.

The Tale of Flowering Fortunes credits Michinaga for conceptualizing the plans for the temple complex:

> He [Michinaga] turned ideas over in his mind all night long. How should the artificial hill be built up? The lake laid out? The garden designed? He must go to construct a whole series of impressive halls. Nor could the images be run-of-the-mill affairs; there would be great numbers of golden Buddhas sixteen feel tall, arranged in a row with a passageway running from north to south in front of them.[60]

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58 Hayami, *Heian kizoku shakai*, p. 89.

59 McCullough and McCullough, *Flowering Fortunes,* pp., 564-567.

60 Ibid., p. 500.

We must assume that in such an elaborate undertaking as building a temple complex, a religious authority was closely consulted in all aspects of the planning. Though art historians generally consider Genshin 源信(942-1017), the Tendai monk known for his authorship of *Ōjōyōshū* 往生要集, as being the inspirator for the Muryōju'in, Michinaga only had minimal contact (if any) to Genshin so most likely he was not directly involved in the building of Hōjōji. There are in fact several more likely candidates -- all prominent Buddhist priests that Michinaga had close ties to at the time he considered constructing Hōjōji. These include Kanshū (d. 1008) who had become Onjōji abbot in 997, the Kannon'in archbishop Shōsan 勝算, and the Ninnaji archbishop Saishin 済信. Another very plausible candidate is the Tendai priest Ingen 院源 (954-1028) whom Michinaga was particularly close to and who is mentioned in his diary numerous times.[61] At the dedication ceremony for the Golden Hall for example, Ingen was the chief lecturer and Michinaga rewarded him with archbishop status. Furthermore, Ingen and Michinaga led the procession when the statues were first transported to the Yakushi hall; they stood at either ends of the steps when the statues were being carried into the building, suggesting Ingen's prominent position in Michinaga's life at the time. Michinaga's friendship with Ingen continued until Michinaga's death in 1024; Ingen was appointed among many prominent monks from Nara, Miiedera, Hiei, Iwakura and Ninnaji to lead the funerary services held for Michinaga.[62]

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[61] Mimi Hall Yiengpruksawan, "The Eyes of Michinaga in the Light of Pure Land Buddhism," in ed. Matthew T. Kapstein, *The Presence of Light: Divine Radiance and Religious Experience* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 245

[62] McCullough and McCullough, *Flowering Fortunes,* p. 766.

Statuary

Extant records show that Kōjō 康尚 and his son Jōchō 定朝, the sculptor known for the Byōdōin Amida 平等院阿弥陀 image, were the main sculptors that produced most, if not all of the main statuary at Hōjōji.[63] Kōjō was a sculptor who was active from the late tenth century to the early eleventh, mainly between 996-1022. He produced many images for members of the ruling elite including Michinaga and Fujiwara no Yukinari 藤原行成(972-1027).[64] Kōjō's ties to the Fujiwara nobles are revealed in Yukinari's diary *Gonki* 権記,[65] and Michinaga's *Midō kanpakuki*, where the sculptor's name appears numerous times. Michinaga's patronage of Kōjō begins around 1005; Kōjō's name appears for the first time in Michinaga's diary (1005-10-23 entry) for the production of a Fugen bodhisattva image for the *Sanmaidō* (*Samādhi* hall)[66] at Jōmyōji.[67] On 1006-4-2, he completed a life-size golden Amida for the Golden Hall at Sesonji 世尊寺 for Fujiwara no Yukinari who had commissioned Kōjō the previous year.

On 1008-8-2, Kōjō completed a white sandalwood Yakushi image for a *shuzen* 修善 ceremony (literally, the Buddhist ritual of "performing good acts"), performed for the sake of the royal consort Shōshi 彰子, which was commissioned on the twenty-fourth day of the

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[63] Mōri Hisashi, *Nihon bukkyō chōkoku no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1970):180.

[64] Mizuno Keizaburō, "*Daibusshi Jōchō*" in *NB* 164 (1980); Nakano Genzō, *Fujiwara chōkoku*, *NB* 50 (1970): 34-51.

[65] Yukinari was a known as calligrapher at court and was the son of Fujiwara no Yoshitaka.

[66] Sanmaidō is a Buddhist hall where the Lotus Sutra is expounded.

[67] Mizuno Keizaburō, *Daibusshi Jōchō*, p. 50.

previous month, according to Michinaga's diary. On 1010-10-4 Kōjō also presented Yukinari with a silver Yakushi and Kannon he was commissioned to make the previous year. Moreover, in 1013 Michinaga presented Kōjō with twenty-four *ryo* of gold for the production of life-size Buddhist images, though it is uncertain what type of images they were. Finally in 1020 he undertook the production of nine Amida statues for Hōjōji's Muryōju'in. Since Kōjō's name is not mentioned after he produced the Miroku image for Sekiji in 1022, Mizuno surmises that Kōjō must have passed away by the time the Golden Hall at Hōjōji was dedicated in 1022.

Jōchō (d.1057), heralded today as one of the foremost sculptors of the Heian period, is first mentioned in the dedication ceremony for the Amida hall in 1020 as Kōjō's apprentice, though scholars believe that he may also have been Kōjō's son. This marks the beginning of his illustrious career as a Buddhist sculptor. Michinaga gave him the title of *Hokkyō* 法橋 (Dharma Bridge Master) in 1022 at the dedication of the Golden Hall statuary, a Buddhist title that was rarely awarded to sculptors. In 1048, Jōchō was awarded the title *Hōgen* 法眼 (Dharma Eye Master) for the restoration of Kōfukuji sculptures lost in a fire, and in 1053 he completed the Byōdōin seated monumental statue of Amida for Michinaga's son, Yorimichi. The Byōdōin Amida is particularly important as it is the only image by Jōchō that has survived and was also the source of inspiration for statues in the joint-wood technique characterized by a new elegance and luxuriousness that came to be known as the Jōchō-style.

While records show evidence that Jōchō was the main sculptor for the Golden Hall images at Hōjōji, early commissions of many Buddhist statues given to Kōjō by Michinaga indicate that he produced many important images for Hōjōji up until 1022, and that at his

death may have turned the reigns over to Jōchō for the Golden Hall and Yakushi Hall images. As Matsubara suggests, Kōjō is the only sculptor who is mentioned by name in both Yukinari and Michinaga's diaries and it is probable that he made a great many more statues for them, even though he was not referred to by name for every commission.[68]

Kōjō and Jōchō were responsible for the new technical innovation in sculpture known as *yosegi zukuri* (joint-wood technique). In contrast to *ichiboku zukuri* where one sculptor carved an image out of a single block of wood, a statue made by *yosegi zukuri* was constructed from several rectangular wood blocks joined together to form the image. In this case, a blue-print of the overall image was drawn up by the master sculptor and then each block of wood was assigned to an artisan-carver who would be responsible for sculpting that particular portion. This kind of assembly-line production was a creative step made to cater to the Fujiwara patrons in order to deal with the heavy demand for images. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes* offers a description of this process; "In one place, master joiners worked on sacred images, assisted by a huge crew of 100 image-carvers. What assignment could be more splendid for an artisan!"[69] The "master joiners" (*kōshō* 巧匠) in the above passage thus refers to the head sculptor who supervised the assistant carvers. Kaikei 快慶 for example, the renowned Kamakura-period Kei studio sculptor often signed his name with *kōshō* (巧匠 or 工匠).[70]

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[68] Mizuno Keizaburō, "*Daibusshi Jōchō,*" p. 53.

[69] McCullough and McCullough, *Flowering Fortunes,* p., 500.

[70] Yoshiko Kainuma, "Kaikei and Early Kamakura Buddhism: A Study of the An'Amiyō Amida Form," (Ph. D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1994), 65-66; Mōri

When the statues were finally completed in the third month of 1024, they were given an elaborate ceremony during which they were transported from their original storage place within the Hōjōji compound to the Yakushi hall. The author of the *Tale of Flowering Fortunes* states that this ceremony took place around the hour of the Dragon [7:00-9:00AM]. The completed statues included seven monumental, golden Yakushi Buddhas. The Medicine Buddha's attendants, Nikkō and Gakkō were also sixteen feet tall, as were the six Kannon statues.[71] The book does not indicate whether the Medicine Buddhas were standing or seated, but since "lion thrones" are mentioned, they were probably seated Buddhas.

During the move from their storage place to the newly consecrated hall, the images were mounted on pairs of carts fitted with large lotus-flower thrones. The carts were accompanied by a grand procession of attendants, wearing lotus-flower hats and scarlet robes. Distinguished monks also accompanied the images. The procession was also accompanied by the scent of priceless incense and the melodious sounds of a variety of musical instruments including panpipes, flutes, seven-stringed zithers, harps, lutes, gongs, and brass cymbals played in unison. There was also a procession of monks who danced in bodhisattva costumes, chanting hymns of praise. Multicolored flowers were scattered throughout the procession.[72]

Hisashi, *Busshi Kaikei ron* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1961), 127-128. According to Mōri, *kōshō* denotes an artisan, such as a carpenter or sculptor.

[71] McCullough and McCullough, *Flowering Fortunes,* p. 622.

[72] Ibid., p. 623. See also (Manju 1) 1024-6-26 entry in *Shoyūki,* in *Zōho shiryō taisei, bekkan* (Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 1980), p. 20; *Yakushidō kuyōki, GR* 24, pp. 271-272.

When the procession reached the Yakushi hall, the statues were carried up the steps. The images were then set down in a row, extending from the south end of the hall to the north, facing west. The iconography of the Yakushi hall was that of the seven manifestations of Yakushi and his entourage as taught in the Shichibutsu Yakushi scripture. The main attendants of Yakushi, the bodhisattvas Nikkō and Gakkō were placed at the North and South ends of the hall, flanking the seven Buddhas. Statues of the Twelve Divine Generals were placed intermittently between them, and they were all about seven feet tall dressed in colorful military attire. *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes* describes the Twelve Divine Generals as having facial expressions suited to their individual temperaments and held different kinds of objects in their hands.[73]

The dedication ceremony for the Yakushi hall was held three months later, in Manju 1(1024-6-26). The Yakushi's Twelve Great Vows were painted on the inner pillars in front of the Medicine Buddhas, and other paintings depicting verses from the Kannon chapter decorated the pillars facing the six images of Kannon (the twenty-fifth chapter of the Lotus Sutra, in which the Buddha gives graphic examples of Kannon's virtues and powers.) Shimizu surmises that these paintings were executed by a court painter in the *Yamatoe* (Japanese painting) style. The function of the paintings on pillars and doors was not purely decorative; they also visually represented a noteworthy characteristic of that deity. Thus the Yakushi hall depicted the twelve vows of Yakushi, the doors for Amida hall had Nine degrees of rebirth, and the pillars in the Shaka Hall depicted scenes from the Lotus Sutra.[74]

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[73] McCullough and McCullough, *Flowering Fortunes,* p. 628.

[74] Shimizu, *Bukkyō kenchikushi*, pp. 62-64.

4. ***Shichibutsu Yakushi hō*: A Morphology**

In this section, I will examine the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō*, including diagrams of the ritual space, by analyzing sections of two medieval documents, *Monyōki* and *Asabashō,* which discuss the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* in detail. *Monyōki* is a fourteenth century collection of various Tendai records from Shōren'in 青蓮院, one of the most important Enryakuji royal cloisters.[75] Specifically, I reference volume 11, which records twenty four instances of the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* performed by the Tendai Shōren'in abbot Gyōgen (行玄 1093-1152) between 1137 and 1147 for the retired Toba tennō 鳥羽 and his immediate relations (royal and lesser consorts).[76]

A. Analysis of the Ritual Space (based on the diagram from the Asabashō)

The diagram contained in the Shichibutsu Yakushi chapter of *Asabashō* illustrates a typical set up for a Shichibutsu Yakushi sanctuary.[77] Multicolored banners are hung all along

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[75] *Monyōki,* in *TZ,* vol. 11.The record spans roughly 300 years from Ten'ei 1(1110) to Ōei 23 (1417). The contents include Tendai esoteric rituals and ceremonies performed by the first Shōren'in abbot Gyōgen up to the time of Sondō (尊道) in the Muromachi period. The first 130 of the 184 scrolls were compiled by Prince Son'en (尊圓親王 1298-1356; a.k.a., *Daijō no miya*), who was the 16th son of Fushimi tennō. *Monyōki* went through subsequent recompilations in later years. The Shichibutsu Yakushi rituals are recorded in scrolls 11 to19.

[76] Gyōgen was the 48th Tendai abbot and the son of Fujiwara no Morozane 藤原師実 (1042-1101).

[77] *Asabashō*, *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* section, in *TZ* 8 [fascicle 48, *Shichibutsu Yakushi*]. This spatial arrangement seems to be a fairly typical set up for the performance of Shichibutsu Yakushi rituals, when compared to the diagrams in the *Monyōki.* Diagrams provided in the *Monyōki* are similar to the *Asabashō* version, with minor differences, such as the placement of the smaller ritual altars for the Twelve Devas, Twelve Divine Generals and Shōten.

the walls and the Medicine Buddhas are arranged in a single line. A small altar with an incense burner (火舎 *kasha*) and six small bowls (六器 *rokki*) is placed in front of each image and in front of the altar is a small round table adorned with offerings. The two most important altars in any esoteric ritual: the great altar and the fire altar are set up directly in front of the seven Yakushi images with the Great Altar (*daidan* 大檀) placed in front of the central Yakushi (Bhaiṣajya-guru), and the Fire altar (*goma dan* 護摩壇) placed to the right of the Great Altar. The Shōten 聖天 altar is always placed in the northeast corner. On the far upper right hand corner are the remaining two smaller esoteric altars; the Yasha altar (夜叉檀 dedicated to the Twelve Divine Generals) and the Twelve Heavenly Deities altar (十二天檀 Jūniten dan).

The Shōten altar is dedicated to the Buddhist deity Shōten, also known as Kangiten 歓喜天. It is a male and female deity with heads of elephants locked in tight embrace, and because the deity is supposed to possess terrible powers, it was almost always placed out of sight in portable shrines (*zushi*).[78] The chief offerings made to Shōten are soup (either red bean or green leaf) and sweets.

[78] According to Louis Frédéric, this deity has a dual nature and is therefore represented by two human figures with elephant heads, interlocked tightly with each other. Their sexual organs are occasionally visual and joined, but often they wear a cloth thown over the shoulders and their hips are also covered. One figure represents a female, usually wearing a simple crown and jewels and she steps on the feet of her partner. For a detailed definition and photo, see Louis Frédéric, *Buddhism: Flammarion Iconographic Guides* (Paris: Flammarion, 1995), 268.

The Twelve Heavenly Deities altar

At the yasha (夜叉 Skt. yakṣa) altar the Twelve Divine Generals, who are guardians of the Medicine Buddhas, are worshipped. According to the scripture, each general had a retinue of seven thousand yakṣa-demons at his command and they vowed to save and benefit all beings that circulated the sutra, upheld the name of the Medicine Buddha, and venerated and made offerings to him.[79] According to the *Yakushi Nyorai kōshiki* 薬師如来講式, they governed the twelve hours of the night and day, the twelve days and twelve months.[80] In the *Asabashō* diagram, the yasha altar is indicated by twelve offerings, dedicated to the twelve generals, arranged in a circular, clockwise fashion.

The *Monyōki* entry from Kōji 2 (1143-4-10) notes that in the North worship hall of Enryakuji's Konpon chūdō, a Shichibutsu Yakushi ritual was performed for retired tennō Toba, who had climbed up Mt. Hiei to witness this event.[81] What is not entirely clear from the *Monyōki* entry on the ritual of 1143 is whether the Shichibutsu Yakushi statues utilized in the ritual were indeed the ninth century ones enshrined in the inner sanctuary of the Konpon chūdō. The passage from 1143 notes that the principal deities were Buddhas of

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[79] Jūniten 十二天 are: Jiten, Bonten, Tamonten, Ishanaten, Taishakuten, Katen, Enmaten, Rasetsuten, Suiten, Fūten, Nitten and Gatten. The Twelve Divine Generals are: Kubira, Basara, Mekira, Antera, Anira, Santera, Indara, Haira, Makora, Shindara, Shotora, Bikara. Jūnishinshō appear in both versions of the Medicine Master sutras. They were part of the assembly listening to the Medicine Master Buddha(s) preach and they vowed to guard and protect those who upheld the Yakushi scripture and reverently worshipped the Medicine Buddhas.

[80] *Yakushi nyorai kōshiki*, *T* 84, no. 2722.

[81] *Monyōki* [Shichibutsu Yakushihō 1], in *TZ* 11, 106bc, 107a.

antiquity, life-size. They were also all golden and held the *semui yogan'in* hand gestures (古佛等身造佛與願施無畏印也、皆金色). This does not correspond to the description of the ninth century Shichibutsu Yakushi in the Konpon chūdō which were all 60.6 centimeters tall and were sandalwood images. Furthermore, the Shichibutsu Yakushi were "secret images" at this point in time and enshrined within the inner sanctuary behind curtains (as in the *Bukkakushō* diagram).

One possible explanation is that the Shichibutsu Yakushi, originally made as sandalwood images were later covered in gold and polychromed. For example, the Yakushi statue that Saichō carved and housed at the Konpon chūdō was originally a plain-wood sandalwood image but Saichō's successor Gishin had the image covered in gold and polychrome applied on its robes in accordance with his master's will.[82] It is quite possible that the same treatment was given to the Shichibutsu Yakushi statues at a later time by a patron sponsoring the ritual.

Mimi Yiengruksawan's research on Heian court diaries has shown that Heian aristocrats commissioned a great number of statues which were often collected and housed together in the worship halls. Furthermore, she has suggested that worship spaces had a tendency to accumulate images over time and that more often, statues and paintings that had nothing to do with the original spatial arrangement were brought into the space.[83] Thus, a more plausible explanation is that Toba commissioned an entirely new set of life-size, golden

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[82] *Eigaku yōki*, *GR* 24, p. 509.

[83] Mimi Hall Yiengpruksawan, "That Statue is Doing What?" (Paper delivered at the 91st Annual Conference of the College Art Association, New York, NY, February 2003), 4-5.

Yakushi images for the event of 1143-4-10, rather than the ninth century images kept hidden in the inner sanctuary.

B. The sequence of ritual actions

As for the descriptions on the ritual itself, the *Monyōki* entries state that the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* was typically held for seven days and seven nights. On the first night, preparations for the offerings (*kuyō* 供養) to the Medicine Buddhas were made. The main officiant, the Great Esoteric Master (*dai ajari* 大阿梨闍) entered the area marked off by hanging blinds where the esoteric altars are set up. Blinds were generally drawn around them and only the *ajari* were allowed to circumambulate inside the blinds while the rest (musicians, assistant monks) circumambulated outside. A scene from the *Ishiyamadera engi scroll* 石山寺縁起絵巻 of an esoteric ritual dedicated to Aizen myōō 愛染明王 being performed in the main hall gives a good idea how the inner and outer sanctuary were clearly marked off.[84] Altars are set up in front of the principal deity, with ritual implements laid out on the offering tables. The inner sanctuary is closed by curtains, and the viewer is barely able to catch a glimpse of the esoteric utensils and the top of a priest's head. Accompanying priests (*bansō* 伴僧), clad in bright red robes, are seated in the area just outside the curtains. The efficacy of the esoteric ritual was thus reliant on its secrecy, behind closed doors. Not even the tennō was allowed inside the inner sanctuary to observe the performance but instead, was given a raised straw mat or cushioned seat enclosed by hanging blind (called the *onza*, or *omashi* 御座), immediately outside the *naijin*, where he could listen to the chanting.

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[84] *Ishihiyamadera engi emaki* fascicle 7, section 3], vol. 16, in *Nihon no emaki zenshū* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1988), p. 88.

Another scene from the *Ishiyamadera engi* scroll illustrates the seating arrangement for the tennō. This scene depicts an all-night Buddhist scripture recitation ritual in Kanna 1 (985) being performed at the main hall, sponsored by retired tennō Enyū 円融 (959-991).[85] The interior of the main hall is marked off by the bright red doors and green lattice. Just outside, four monks and senior court nobles dressed in white attire are seated on a raised straw mat. To the right of these attendees is a rectangular raised platform, completely closed off by green hanging bamboo blinds. One can clearly see the hems of royal robes peeking out from under the hanging bamboo blinds, indicating that this is Enyū tennō. Likewise, in a diagram provided in the *Monyōki* of the Shichibutsu Yakushi ritual space held on Kenji 2 (1143-4-10), retired tennō Toba's royal seat is marked as *In gosho* 院御所("The honorable place for the retired tennō") and it appears to be closed off by some kind of partition and placed just outside the inner sanctuary.[86]

There were several other esoteric masters, each responsible for tending the remaining altars (goma, Jūniten, Yasha, Shōten), in addition to the great esoteric master. As part of paying homage to the Buddhas (*kuyō* 供養), during the Kōji 2 (1143-4-10) ceremony the *ajari* all circumambulated (from right to left) around the Medicine Buddhas and usually around each esoteric altar three times (with the exception of the Jūniten). During this circumambulation, musicians performed for the procession (with gongs, cymbals and drums) while they also circumambulated outside in the corridor.

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[85] *Ishihiyamadera engi emaki* [fascicle 2, section 5], vol. 16, p. 21.

[86] *Monyōki*, *TZ* 11, 107a.

One of the highlights of the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* was *kessen* 結線"Ritual act of tying the cord) performed by the great esoteric master after the "proclamation of intent" ceremony (*kaibyaku* 開百) was completed. Then, the power of the Twelve Divine Generals were invoked by chanting the Jūnishinshō incantation while five cords of different colors, set at the ritual table were empowered 49 times by the *vajra*, an esoteric ritual implement.

Next, five cords of different color, were woven together into a single cord. After performing the *Shōnenju* ritual 正念誦 (Rite of True Recitation), the woven cord was then placed back on top of the small ritual table. Then, the great esoteric master knotted the cord 49 times (usually during a 3 day period) into a rope the width of a small finger while holding it in the fumes from the incense burner.[87] The efficacy of the knotted cord is clearly explained in the Shichibutsu Yakushi sutra: "Those who seek release from the distress of illness should also read and recite this sutra. They should take a five-colored rope and knot our names (the names of the Jūnishinshō), untying the knots when their wishes are fulfilled."[88] The idea behind chanting the names of each Divine General was that a talented esoteric master had the ability to control and pacify the deities when their names were read out. This can be found, for instance, in the *Ishiyamadera engi* scroll which contains a scene where the Heian period Shingon monk Rekikai 歴海 performs a rain-making ritual and

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[87] Yamamoto Hiroko 山本ひろ子, "Shirei tachi no sekai: Chūsei Eizan no Jūnishinshō o megutte," in *Jūnishinshō*, *NB* 381 (1998): 96.

[88] Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha*, p. 208. Details of the *kessenhō* are also outlined in *Asabashō* [fascicle 47], *TZ* 8, p. 333A.

recites the names of the rain-making deities, during which the Dragon King and his servants appears before him, subdued and ready to pay homage.[89]

Thus, the *kessen* comprised a core part of the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō*, in accordance to the Junishinshō's vows that one's wishes would be fulfilled when the Junishinshō's names were called out with knots tied to a colored cord. The five colors of the thread symbolized the five directions, each with a demon associated with it and the tying of the knot brought stability to insecure places. The knotted cord was then presented to the ritual sponsor (Retired tennō Toba).

When the wishes were fulfilled the knots needed to be untied in order to release the spirits that were evoked.[90] One commentary in *Asabashō* states that even if the wish was not fulfilled, the knots needed to be untied less misfortune strike the person again. Another commentary tells a story about how Kongōjuin 金剛寿院 (Kakujin 覚尋) performed the *Shibutsu Yakushihō* for the Retired tennō Go Sanjō. Shortly after, Go Sanjō had a dream where twelve warriors appeared before him and begged him to free them. Go Sanjō inquired, "Who are you?" and they replied, "The abbot of Mt. Hiei came to us and ordered us to protect you." Go Sanjō recounted his dream to Gakujin and the priest answered, "This is because I did not untie the knots," and duly untied them. After the strange apparitions

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[89] *Ishihiyamadera engi emaki* [fascicle 2, section 6], pp. 22-23. Dates for Rekikai are unknown but he studied under the Shingon monk Shōbō 聖宝(832-909) and later became a Tōdaiji priest.

[90] *Medicine Master Sutra: A Simple Explanation by the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua*, Buddhist Text Translation Society trans. (Burlingame CA,1997),173.

appeared in Go Sanjō's dream a second time, the priest ordered them to disperse and the warriors disappeared.[91]

Ato kaji 後加持

Another important feature of the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō*, noted in both the diagrams and passages from the *Monyōki*, is the ritual action known as *Ato kaji* 後加持 (also known as Gyo'e kaji 御衣加持). *Ato kaji* was not a ritual sequence exclusive to *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* but was utilized in both Tendai and Shingon rituals (such as the Shingon Latter Seven-Day Rite; *Go-shichinichi mishihō*).[92] Many of the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* listed in the Monyōki included *Ato kaji* as a particularly significant part of the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* where the tennō's robe was presented in front of the Shichibutsu Yakushi images and consecrated. This part of the ritual sequence was aimed specifically to empower the "body of the tennō" and by extension, the tennō himself. Unfortunately, not a lot of detail is noted concerning the *Ato kaji* ritual in the *Monyōki* other than the fact that it was performed on a given day. The diagram from the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* held on Kyūan 3 (1147-6-17) at the Konpon chūdō marks clearly the altar (between the great altar and fire altar) where the royal robes were consecrated.[93]

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[91] Yamamoto Hiroko, "Shirei tachi no sekai," 97; *Asabashō* [fascicle 46], *TZ* 8, p. 336b.

[92] For more information on the Latter Seven-Day Rite, see Brian Ruppert, *Buddha Relics and Power in Early Medieval Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2000), 102-141.

[93] *Monyōki, TZ* 11, p. 109c.

5. Summary

In this chapter, the connection between esoteric Tendai praxis at Enryakuji and Shichibutsu Yakushi Buddha images was explored. There are only two full sets of extant Shichibutsu Yakushi statues that have survived and these trace their iconographical and ritual lineage to the mid ninth century esoteric Shichibutsu Yakushi statues that were the main icons of Enryakuji's Konpon chūdō. While a descriptive analysis of these icons has been extremely challenging since they no longer exist, a study of Tendai documents such as the *Monyōki* and *Asabashō* are valuable sources illuminating how these icons functioned in a ritual setting. Though there are many elaborate steps in the performance of the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō*, the diagrams and entries clearly indicate that the rituals performed cannot hold its own without the principal objects of worship. Particularly in the case of the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō*, the Seven Medicine Buddhas comprised the centerpiece of the ritual. Surely one can argue that the full potency of the ritual could only have been drawn out by an experienced esoteric master. But more importantly, the key features of the material icons – those of location, quantity, brilliance, beauty -- to paraphrase Richard H. Davis, show that the icons themselves were the primary site of ongoing interaction and exchange. This exchange between humans and the divine animated the icons as living, personal deities.[94]

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[94] Davis, *Lives of Indian Images*, pp. 29-30.

CONCLUSION

Yakushi Buddha still continues to be a popular deity in Japan, and the history of its cultic worship goes back as early as the late seventh century, continuing through the Nara period and blossoming in the Heian period. Yakushi did not solely dominate the Japanese religious scene however: it was one of many Buddhist and *kami* deities whose images were sculpted and painted, housed in the sacred space of temple and shrine worship halls, brought to life and periodically animated through ritual performances as *icons*, in the hopes that they would bring solace and spiritual benefits to the faithful patrons, as well as honors and rewards to skillful ritual officiants.

Buddhist icons can take a variety of forms, shapes, and sizes, for they are embodiments of a worshipper's desire and vision to bring a deity to life, embodied in the physical material.[1] Furthermore, icons were not limited to sculptures but were venerated in other forms, such as paintings (portraits and mandalas, for example). Materials for making sculptural icons have included stone, clay, and bronze, but wood became by far the most common material in Japan. From this perspective, the Heian period marked an innovative time in the history of icon production in Japan, because this is the time when wood came to be seen as the most sacred and effective material for representing (and animating) Buddhist deities. This was partly inspired by the continental tradition of creating sandalwood images, which traced its long history to Central Asia and Tang China. Local, indigenous forms of *kami* worship, rooted in the reverence for numinous presences perceived by humans in

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[1] Nishimura Kōchō, *Hotoke no sugata* (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1990), 156.

mountains, forests, rivers, and other natural environs, facilitated a smooth assimilation of this idea.

Icons played an essential role in Japanese history by promising practical, this-worldly benefits. During the Heian period, Yakushi images were believed to not only cure illnesses but were known to pacify angry spirits, prolong life, ensure safe childbirth, and even guide the devout to Amida Buddha's Western Pure Land! The power of the icon was ensured by following proper iconography derived from scripture and ritual manuals. This efficacy was further enhanced by replication; icons were frequently copied and distributed. With the deity Yakushi, two main icon types can be found in Japan which were frequently replicated; the standing Yakushi icon type and the seated Shichibutsu Yakushi. The standing Yakushi icon-type, attributed to Saichō, the charismatic founder of Enryakuji and the Tendai sect, had certain key characteristics, such as being an image made in accordance to the sandalwood tradition, the application of lavish colors and gold ornamentation on the wood, having a measurement of roughly 160 centimeters in height, and either having *semui yogan* hand gestures with or without a medicine pot held in the left palm.

The seated Shichibutsu Yakushi icon type, found in the example of the Shin Yakushiji image, consists of a seated Yakushi image with a mandorla representing six or seven Yakushi *kebutsu.* Further innovations were made to include representations of Yakushi and his main attendants, Nikkō, Gakkō bodhisattvas and the Twelve Divine Generals, which were depicted on the mandorla or on both the mandorla and pedestal. Extant examples of this can be found with the Shōjiji image, which has a mandorla depicting six Yakushi and the Twelve Divine Generals and the Ninnaji Yakushi, which has a halo representing Shichibutsu

Yakushi, a backing with Nikkō and Gakkō, and a pedestal with the Twelve Divine Generals. This iconography was probably based on the original *honzon* of Tōji's Golden Hall.

Another important issue considered in this study was the problem of reconstructing lost images. How can we reconstruct objects of the past that leave only a remnant of their resplendent existence in written records? In tracing the origin of the standing and seated Yakushi icon types, it was necessary to consult various written records, from court diaries, temple histories, and iconographical and ritual manuals all of which contain information about images that no longer existed. If done with great caution and critical scrutiny, this is a viable methodology for illuminating and broadening our knowledge of icon veneration in ancient times.

This methodology was also necessary in understanding icons within their ritual contexts. Yakushi images were used in various kinds of rituals at different time periods, which is not surprising, considering the wide-range of benefits the deity promised when successfully animated by ritual. The Shin Yakushiji image seems to have been used for certain esoteric rites based on a practice expounded in the *Daranishū kyō*, which instructed followers to purify a site with packed pure soil, making a circular mound and erecting a Yakushi image in the center. Both the Shin Yakushiji and Jingoji Yakushi images, regardless of being seated or standing, were often utilized during the first half of the ninth century in official Buddhist rites of repentance to pray for the protection and prosperity of the country.

Brian Ruppert has suggested that Buddhist relics should be regarded as objects being deeply entrenched in the logic of power relations, rather than being mere spiritual

embodiments, and icons should also be considered from this perspective.[2] In Heian Japan, this exchange of power took place between the religious community of Buddhist priests who produced the icons and conducted their rituals and the patrons, which included the royal family as well as powerful aristocratic nobles who dominated court politics. Buddhist priests offered spiritual merit and worldly benefits in exchange for the patronage of their temples in order to sustain their monastic community, while secular patrons provided the economic means to maintain the steady the production of icons. The worship of Shichibutsu Yakushi by Fujiwara nobles and retired tennōs in the second half of the Heian period shows their specific attitudes towards the production of icons and their veneration. Yakushi images, originally sought out for their abilities to exorcise angry spirits, lost this role to esoteric deities and were worshipped for other practical efficacies, particularly their powers to ensure safe childbirth.

The esoteric Ritual of the Seven Medicine Buddhas was developed by powerful Tendai ecclesiastics at Enryakuji to benefit their royal and aristocratic patrons. The *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* was one among many rituals employed by various interest groups. Fujiwara Michinaga's practice of worshipping Shichibutsu Yakushi is exemplary of the way powerful elites accumulated status and power, through the construction of majestic temples and magnificent images, as well as their active patronage of elite Buddhist ecclestiastics. The clerical community in turn provided potent esoteric rituals and promised worldly and spiritual benefits to their patrons. To quote Ruppert, "Performative ritual and apotropaic esotericism formed the tense nexus of efforts to reconstruct not only relations among the

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2 Brian Ruppert, *Jewel in the Ashes: Buddha Relics and Power in Early Medieval Japan* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2000), 12-13.

central government, the provinces, and the capital aristocracy, but also those between the clerical and non-clerical communities as well as within these same groups."[3] Esoteric rituals such as the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* were a valuable commodity, and Buddhist images became endowed with utmost secrecy particularly during the performance of an esoteric rite. The exchange between the ritual master and elite patron during an esoteric performance also signified the transaction of power relations between the two parties.

Power relations and the distribution of power in the making and using of icons is a useful framework for understanding their underlying meaning, but do not sufficiently explain why they continued to be so powerful and compelling to people for generations. In other words, we must understand the process by which icons have attained their intrinsic sacred aura. I find James Preston's idea of *spiritual magnetism*, the power an object or site has to attract devotees, an extremely useful term to define Buddhist icons.[4] According to Preston, spiritual magnetism is not based on an intrinsic quality of sacredness but rather, is derived "from human concepts and values, via historical, geographical, social and other forces that coalesce in a sacred center." These values did not devalue or diminish the attributes of mystery and miracle attributed to the phenomenon, but in fact made it empirically measurable.[5]

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[3] Brian Ruppert, *Jewel in the Ashes,* p. 278.

[4] Preston used this term to describe pilgrimages and sacred sites. James Preston, "Spiritual Magnetism: An Organizing Principle for the Study of Pilgrimage," in *Sacred Journeys: The Anthology of Pilgrimage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992)

[5] Ibid., p. 33.

The Enryakuji Konpon chūdō Yakushi images for example, derived their spiritual magnetism from their association to Saichō, and from the concept of "auspicious icons," as well as the sandalwood tradition attributed to King Udayana. Though the Konpon chūdō statues were lost and long forgotten, these human concepts and values were nevertheless instilled and passed onto the reproductions, which then acquired new values, histories, and meanings in the temples where they were enshrined. In this way, many of the statues discussed in this research (Jingoji, Shin Yakushiji) continue to draw tourists and worshippers to their temples. At times, they are taken out of their religious contexts and displayed in museum and gallery exhibits around the country. While some may argue that museums and galleries render icons as secular objects without power, the occasional offerings of coins left by visitors in front of displayed images demonstrate that as long as they are preserved, they will continue to generate spiritual magnetism.

ABBREVIATIONS

AA	*Artibus Asiae*
AB	*Art Bulletin*
BG	*Bukkyō geijutsu* 仏教芸術
BK	*Bijutsu kenkyū* 美術研究
DK	*Dai Nihon kokiroku* 大日本古記録
DNBZ	*Dai Nihon Bukkyō zensho* 大日本仏教全書
GR	*Gunsho ruijū* 群書類従
KBS	*Kōkan bijutsu shiryō* 校刊美術資料
KT	*Kokushi taikei* 国史大系
MN	*Monumenta Nipponica*
NB	*Nihon no bijutsu* 日本の美術
NCKSS	*Nihon chokoku kiso shūsei shiryō: Heian jidai: zōzō meiki hen* 日本彫刻史基礎資料集成日本彫刻史基礎資料集成：平安時代：造像銘記篇
NKBT	*Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 日本古典文学大系
SNKBT	*Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 新日本古典文学大系
T	*Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大蔵経
TZ	*Taishō shinshū daizōkyō zuzō* 大正新大蔵経図像
ZGR	*Zoku gunsho ruijū* 続群書類従

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